Solid Copy

The CW Operators Club Newsletter
July 2026 — Issue 198

73 days, 55 parks, 2,000+ QSOs. Maximum fun! Jim recounts his trek across North America on pg 16.

CWops "CWT" 1 hour 'tests
Every Wednesday at 1300z and 1900z
Every Thursday at 0300z and 0700z
Exchange: name/number (members)
name/SPC (non-members)
Avoid DX Pileups!

CWO Mini-club callsign web site:
http://cwomc.org

CWops "neighborhood": Look for CWops on 1.818, 3.528, 7.028, 10.118, 14.028, 18.078, 21.028, 24.908, 28.028, 50.098 "and up"

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Secretary: Jim Talens, N3JT
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WebGeek: Dan Romanchik KB6NU
Newsletter Editor: Dick Strassburger, N9EEE

President's Message

It's July 4th here in the USA.

There is a heat dome over 1/3 of North America, another one over central Europe and a "super" typhoon brewing over the Pacific. Everything is hot except the bands with a K index of 7!!! By the time you read this,

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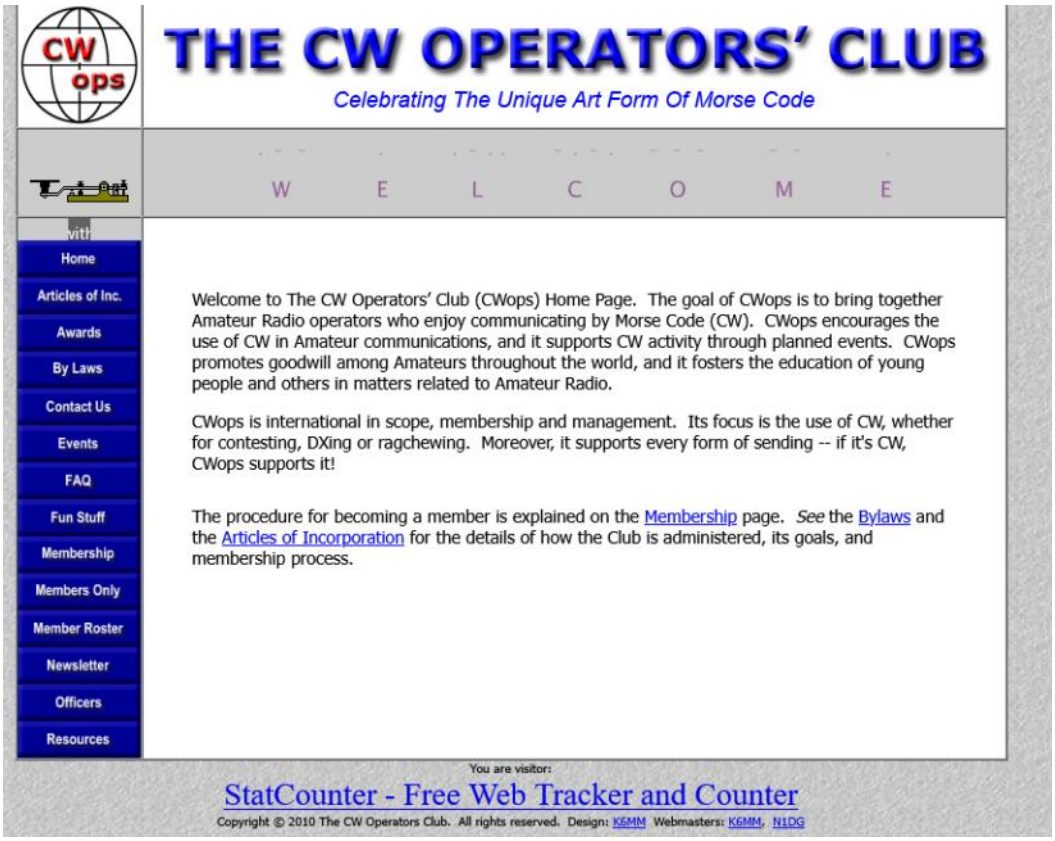
WRTC2026 will be over but I predict it was great working all our CWops members among the competitors (a majority of the competitors!). I hope you all made lots of contacts and enjoyed the activity.

Speaking of activity, have you seen our amazing website lately. It is constantly undergoing upgrades by our two webmasters and several others. Back in 2009, John Miller, K6MM, and I created the original web presence as an introduction to our club and explaining our membership criteria:



It was simple but effective back then. Looking back at the progression of the sites is always fun. Dan, KB6NU, took over as webmaster about 10 years ago and now he and Theo, SV2BBK, who has helped out from the beginning, are our current webmasters. Another important part of the team is Trung, W6TN, who has kept our membership roster current and accessible. With his marketing background, our Editor Dick, N9EEE, is always contributing on layout and other ideas. And recently, Dick worked with his son-in-law to create a CWops Academy logo and improve the readability of our original CWops logo. It takes a village.

Per Google Analytics, our site had 411,000 page views in the last 6 months. The average person looked at 4 pages per session meaning we have close to 200,000 visitors a year to CWops.org. Last year, in total we had close to 800,000 page views as well. There were over 37,000 unique users of the site in the first 6 months of 2026 of which 48% were from NA. What drives this traffic? 40% of the users land on the CW Academy student resource pages including the practice files (intermediate practice files being the number one visited page), the CWops morse code trainer, lessons, trainer resources and other pages associated with the academy and learning.

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Our member roster pages are also highly popular as are the member bios. But our mission in improving the skill of CW operators remains the most popular activity area of the CWops.

If you haven't been to our website lately, spend some time there and see how many things are there for you. It's educational, fun and you never know what valuable tools you can pick up to enjoy the CW aspect of our hobby. A lot of work has gone into it these past 16 years.

***73, Don*, N1DG, President** (CWops #2)

SC

Editor's Note

Dits and Dahs

My End Fed Half Way sloper, cut to 40-meters, has survived the summer storms though I've been rooting for those storms to take it down. The high end of the sloper is 60 feet off the ground draped over some tree branches and over time the support line has burrowed its way into the tree bark such that I can't adjust the line - lengthen or shorten to pick up any slack. It was meant to be temporary until I could launch another line through the crotch of the tree, but I was too late…the line is now one with the tree. It doesn't budge. And over time, as some branches have broken, that sloper is sagging. That poor sloper is no longer in a straight line but becoming more like a "U". Now, this is likely a human emotional reaction rather than a scientific one - EZNEC analysis shows it is still effective and hasn't succumbed to being NVIS just yet. So I should be happy, right? I mean all of Mother Nature's fury has made her attempts to destroy it, but apparently Davis Flex answers the call and takes a beating. You just know the minute I stop worrying about it, the darn thing will be on the ground…and it will be January. For now, it's a very warm day in Wisconsin and I should head to the beach and worry about something else. Afterall, I did earn DXCC as QRP CW with this thing. It should be enshrined in the "EFHW Sloper Hall of Fame."

I have another dream…to travel North America visiting our wonderful National Parks and local natural wonders…activating POTA in the lower 48 and Canada. Jim Stockwell, W6KC is doing just that with his wife and writes about his adventures starting on page 16. Perhaps that story will be my inspiration to go from dream to reality. Maybe yours too?

***73, Dick* N9EEE,** (CWops #3113)
Editor, *Solid Copy*
SolidCopy@cwops.org

Ops News and Notes

Duncan (Mac) Fisken, G3WZD

Welcome to another Ops News and Notes This is your space to let our Members know about an interesting activation, an operating award, a shiny new key or perhaps a useful gizmo that makes your CW experience even better. Please send all submissions to me at NewsAndNotes@cwops.org and remember, there's no need to wait for Dick's monthly call for articles, or my reminder. TU!

Stew, GW0ETF (GW2CWO in Giving Back and GW4J in CWT) #919 The second record-breaking heat wave within 4 weeks as June came to a close, persuaded us to jump in our VW Campervan and go in search of a breeze at our favourite cliff top site on the Lleyn Peninsula of North Wales (IO72pt). To avoid missing my Tuesday evening 'Giving Back' slot I packed my K2, Sotabeams 40/30/20m linked dipole and mast, battery and key and managed 2 lengthy contacts with beginners while running about 7 watts. The following evening (June 24th) I joined in the 1900 CWT with 5 watts though I won't be doing that again with just my phone to log with ;-)

Vic, 4X6GP #5 This morning just before sun-up I answered a CQ from Benny, K5KV. He was using a bug (and he really knows how to use it). He mentioned that it was "bug night", which I had forgotten about since it is not a big deal in this part of the world.

I grabbed a bug off the shelf, a 1960 Vibroplex Original Standard given to me by W6SX, a bug he used when he was K2SSX. It had been in a fire and was covered with black goop when I got it. For some reason, it is my favorite bug among several fancier ones that I have. We had a nice chat for a few minutes, enjoying the great propagation and, on my side, the early-morning quiet band. I wasn't especially happy about my bug sending, which I've neglected, but Benny was polite.

Anyway, it was just a nice old-fashioned QSO, like I used to have all the time. Thanks to K5KV, W6SX, and my memories.

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Allan, VK2GR #3087 I was very pleased to receive the CQ 160m CW Contest Oceania plaque for 2026. The award is proudly displayed my radio shack wall. The plaque was sponsored by Sid, NH7C.

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CQ 160m contest has big challenges down-under. Apart from geographical distance, being in southern hemisphere mid-summer period, electrical storms often form in the evenings from the +30c days. Then there is cyclone season in northern Australia in December and January; QRN often wipes out the low bands for NA contacts in the evenings.

For NA contacts, we need to follow the grey-line moving across the Caribbean and USA sunrise times and for EU there is only a short 30 to 40 minutes of possible openings near our eastern Australian sunrise. Working OC or AS stations on the 160m band is generally possible form southeastern Australia.

Hanz, YL3JD #2227 Cats and dogs don't always have to fight like cats and dogs. In fact, this August they're working together as a team: An international group of operators will be on the air throughout the month in a mutual celebration of International Cat Day and International Dog Day.

The combined special event stations will be active from the 1st of August through to the 31st of August, to call attention to the needs of abandoned, abused and homeless pets around the world – and to advocate for adoption and humane treatment.

Many of the operators are animal-lovers themselves who know the power of rescue because they have been deeply involved in organized animal-welfare efforts or have included a rescued dog or cat in their family.

International Dog Day (and in the US, National Dog Day) is August 26 every year. International Cat Day is August 8.

International Dog Day began as an amateur radio event in 2022 and has grown since then. Stations for dogs and cats will be on the air this year from Latvia, the UK, the US, the Netherlands, India and Germany. Throughout the US, a growing team of radio amateurs will share the call sign KØDOG, calling CQ as members of the Dog Day Radio Amateur Radio Club. All operators will be on the HF bands using CW and SSB.

This year's certificate for successful chasers will be a colorful downloadable document with endorsement stamps added for each unique call sign worked. A numeric counter will appear on each of the endorsement stamps for operators making more than one contact with a unique callsign. KØDOG also plans to make downloadable eEQSL cards available.

The website will give hunters for both events a chance to claim their awards as they earn them and to see who is currently on the air. Until August, the website will be counting down the days until the event begins.

You may also visit the websites dogdayradio.org and catdayradio.org for updates about both events. Both websites contain information about the special-event callsigns and how to find their operating schedules -- and a chance to meet the dogs and cats who inspired them.

Be aware that all special-event operators will be working like dogs – and cats – because they want to hear and share as many rescue stories as they can.

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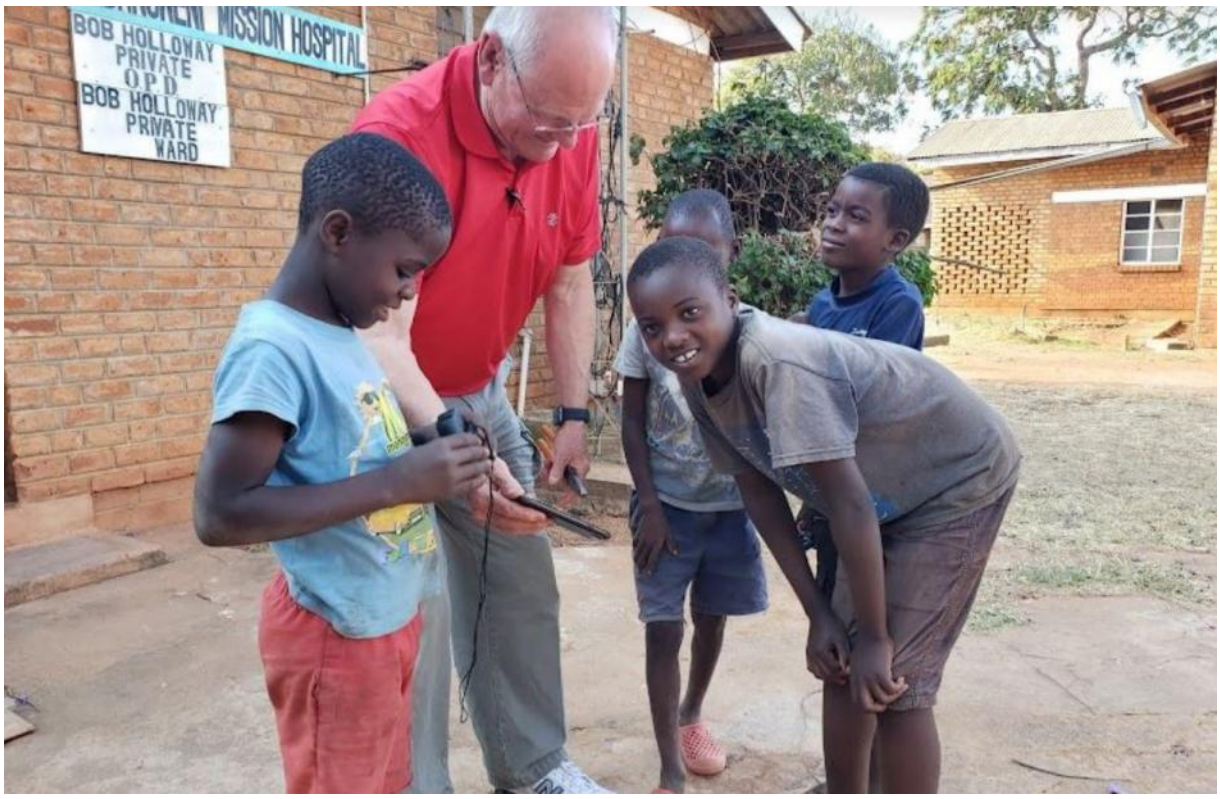
Bill, W0TG #1873 I received this thank you message from Rudolf, DK7HA, F5VBT

"I just received the plaque for winning "Europe Single Operator QRP CW" in the 2025 ARRL DX Contest. It's really a honour to receive this one and thanks for sponsoring it.

I am running the contests "field-day style" in the countryside, downtown here in Hamburg it's too noisy, no chance especially on the low bands. It comprises a spider beam, a 40m inverted-Vee and a lambda/4 vertical for 80m. Keeps me always busy for a couple of days. Hope to continue to participate. All the best and 73, Rudolf."

Don, 7Q6M (K6ZO) #1375 CWops members are helping grow an amateur radio community in Malawi, Africa from the ground up. Bill Perkins KC4D (7Q7WW) has been traveling to Malawi on mission trips with the Presbyterian Church since 2001. In his travels, Bill met Junior Nyirongo, who worked at Embangweni Mission Hospital. In 2009, Bill and Brian Pool 7Q7BP helped Junior Nyirongo become the first Malawian amateur radio operator in the country. In 2017, Bill introduced Don Jones, K6ZO (7Q6M), to Junior Nyirongo, 7Q7JN, and to Embangweni Mission Hospital. Don Jones has made 17 trips to Malawi since 2017. He started teaching amateur radio and STEM to youngsters in 2023. In 2024, the Jeffrey Dahn Memorial Foundation was established to honor Jeff Dahn, KB3ZUK. The foundation educates African youth in STEM and amateur radio. As a result, twenty-four new amateur radio operators have been licensed in Malawi in the last two years. The Foundation is helping these youngsters with school and tuition fees for secondary school and university. The Malawi Amateur Radio Society has been established and will become an IARU member Society later this year. The call sign of the headquarters station will be 7QØHQ.



Bill Perkins with kids Embangweni MH

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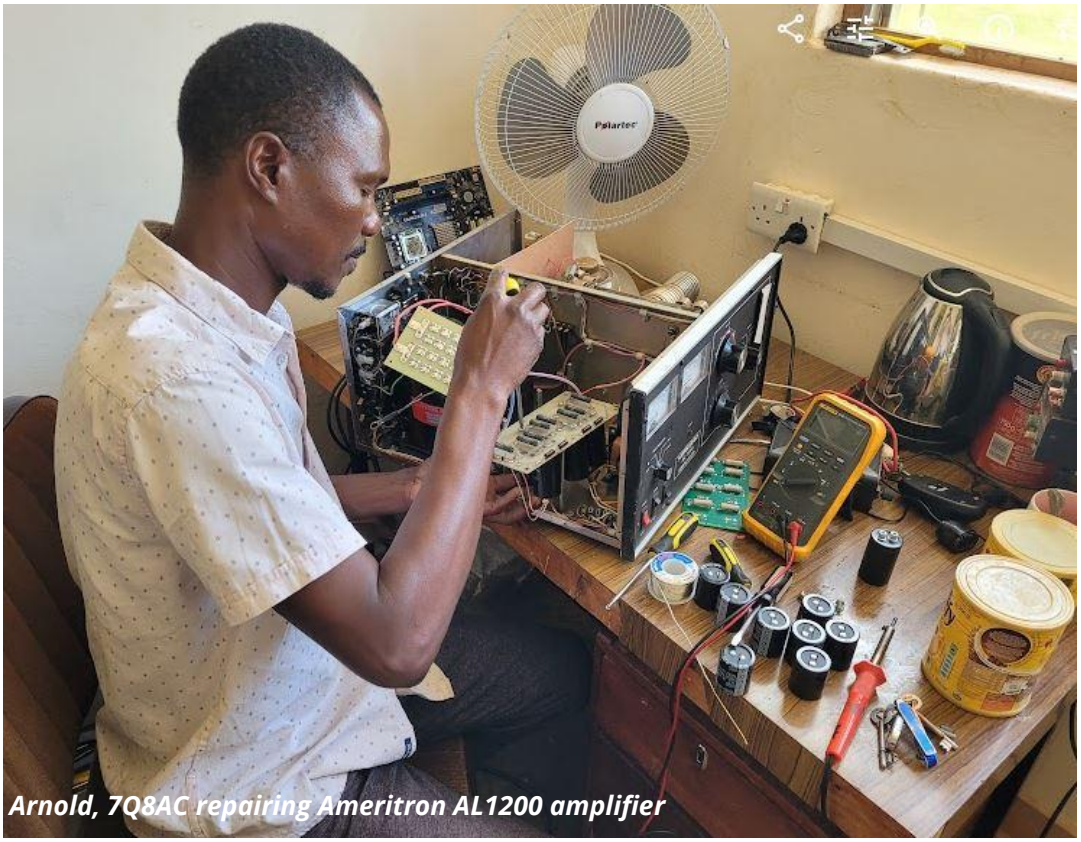
The CCAP Church in Embangweni, Malawi, has offered us an abandoned cellular radio site for our station and learning center.



Arnold, 7Q8AC repairing Ameritron AL1200 amplifier

Students at hospital radio room

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Urgent, 7Q6UJ finishing the 8-el 6m yagi

POTA event at Kasungu Ntional Park

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Our project this summer is to ship a 20 ft sea container full of donations from Baltimore to Malawi. We are looking for towers, aluminum tubing, antennas, transceivers, amplifiers, hardline, coax, computers, ham radio accessories, and donations to help cover the cost of shipping the container. Please contact Don Jones at 7q6m.599@gmail.com if you have anything to donate. Donations may be made online at https://dahnfoundation.org or by mail to

Jeffrey Dahn Memorial Foundation
Attn: Don Jones
3130 Wisconsin Ave NW #723
Washington, DC 20016

* Jeffrey Dahn Memorial Foundation is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation.

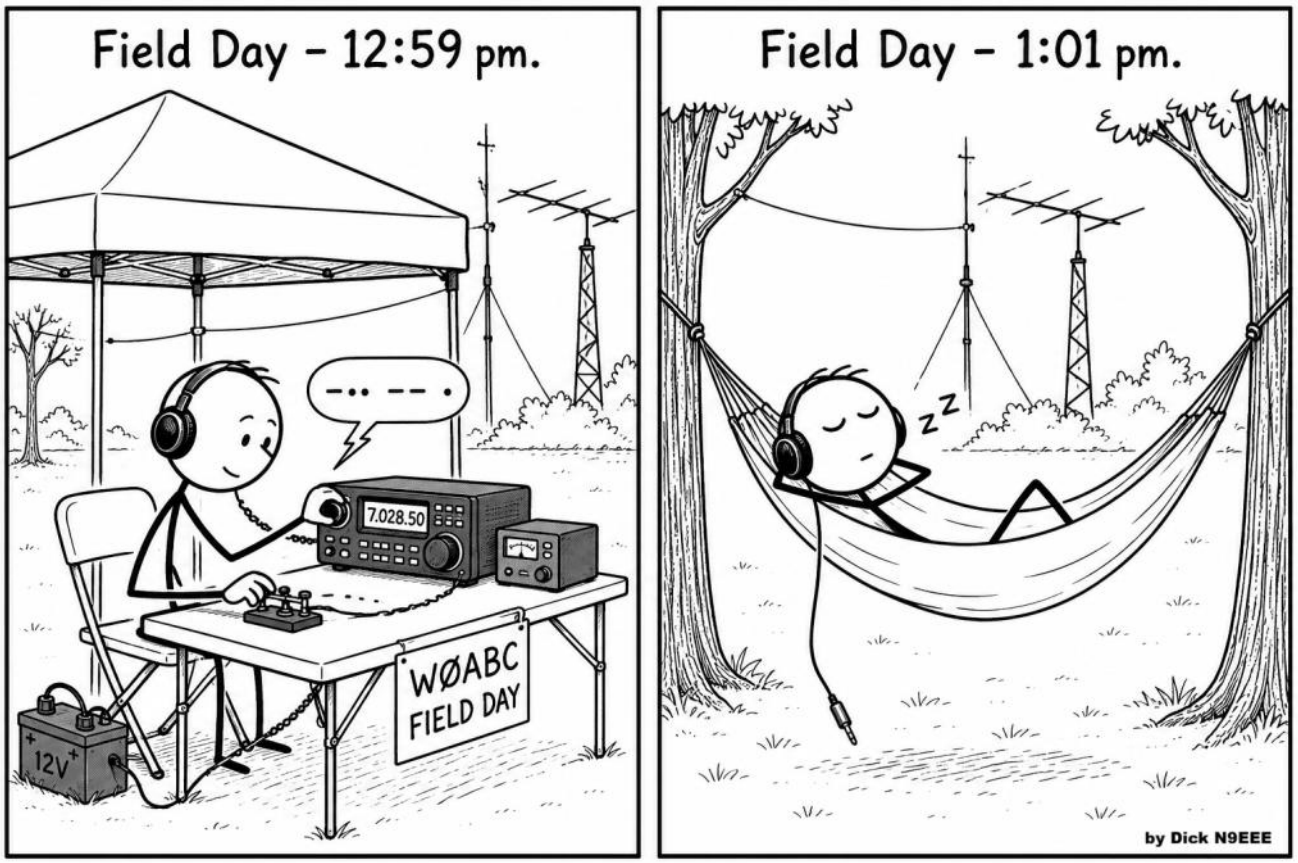
Anyone interested in joining us in Malawi is certainly enouraged to participate! Thanks for your support!

Thank you and, until the next News and Notes, QAC!

Duncan, G3WZD (CWops #1979)

NewsAndNotes@CWops.org

Hamming It Up



How We Were

Ian Capon, GWØKRL

KR2Q, Doug Zwiebel, CWops #438

1967 - passed General class

1971 - Rolling Stones fan club

1977 - at N2AA Multi-Multi CQWW

1986 Contest Hall of Fame #1

KR2Q (left) presenting to K2GL, Buzz (right)

1988 - first harmonic (Samantha)

2009 CQWW at 4U1UN

So now it's your turn, do you have a picture to share accompanied by a brief paragraph description, of your early days in radio, experimenting, exploring or just "being a ham". Please send it to Ian Capon.

***73, Ian* GWØKRL** (CWops #2896)

North American CW Weekend

Jim Talens, N3JT (CWops #1)

L TO R WB4DNL, W2QL, WN7S, N3JT, K3EW, K6ZO, at Friday night pizza gathering.

K6ZO, Don, sorely tempted by desserts at DC dinner.

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Don listening carefully to dinner chatter

W4ZYT and AA4JJ, one urologist and one ophthalmologist, discussing the menu at Saturday night dinner gathering.

Main event cuisine for brunch at N3JT.

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W4ZYT; Marlene, AA4JJ-2; K4PBB; Patricia, K4PBB-2; AA4JJ; Nina ((K4NML, aka N3JT-2)

WN7S, WB4DNL, W2QL, and N4BA at brunch at N3JT's house.

CW Open

Bruce Meier, N1LN (CWops #1141)

Announcing the 2026 CW Open Contest

It is almost time for the annual CW Open event. Yes, hard to believe but by the time you read this article, it will be less than 1 month away. Conditions may be different than last year with perhaps one exception. You guessed it – the weather. Last year it was hot. This year it is VERY HOT and, unfortunately, that seems to be a global issue. So, if you happen to be one of the fortunate operators and have an air-conditioned shack, one way to escape the heat for a few hours would be to operate one or all sessions of the CW Open.

The dates and times for the 2026 sessions are:

Session 1: Sept 5 (00:00 – 03:59 UTC)
Session 2: Sept 5 (12:00 – 15:59 UTC)
Session 3: Sept 5 (20:00 – 23:59 UTC)

Staying on the theme of high temperatures, chances are you have a few ham buddies that are also complaining about the heat. Why not contact them and see if they would like to be part of a CW Open team? Registration is simple. Just click the link on the CWops / CW Open web page and fill out the Team Registration Form. Last year we only had 17 registered teams. Let's try to get closer to the 2023 team count of 24. The team rosters ranged from a full 10 member team down to 4 members. Talk to your ham buddies and sign up! The team rosters can be made up of CWops members and non-members. It is always more fun being part of a team and might just increase your BIC (Butt in Chair) time and score! Please register early and beat the September 3 and 4 rush!!

If you have not yet participated in the CW Open, you should give it a try! Each session is a standalone event and is only 4 hours long. With that flexibility you can operate as little or as much as you want. Unlike the weekly CWTs, the CW Open is more of a marathon and less of a sprint. You don't need tons of aluminum in the air and KWs of power. Low power and dipoles work just fine for this event.

I would like to thank ICOM America for once again sponsoring the CW Open and the plaques for 2026. For more information on the qualification process and the awards offered, please check out the CW Open awards section in the CWops website.

For additional information please refer to the CW Open website at the following URL: https://cwops.org/cwops-tests/cw-open/ Look down the web page for the team sign-up link. It is lots of fun as a single op but even more fun to be part of a team. The team membership has NO GEOGRAPHIC RESTRICTIONS. It can be local, national, or international.

Hope to get you in my log for one or even better, all three sessions!

73, Bruce N1LN
CW Open Manager

Chasing the Edge of North America

Jim Stockwell, W6KC (CWops #1266)

Since retiring seven years ago, my wife JoAnn, K6FBI, and I have combined our love for travel with my passion for amateur radio. In 2019, we spent three months traversing Europe (chronicled in my November 2019 *Solid Copy* article, "Traveling with Ham Radio in Europe"). By 2023, we launched our first US/Canada cross-country road trip, and we have hit the road every year since. We have now operated from all ten Canadian provinces and 49 US states - leaving only Alaska on our bucket list. The combination of CWTs, POTAs, and special radio events offers the perfect excuse to set operating goals and have a blast while traveling. This year, our route zigzagged across the continent to pick up our missing states and activate Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) - the final Canadian province on our list.

The Route East

We departed our home QTH in Santa Monica on April 6, 2026, following historic Route 66 toward Springfield, Missouri, to visit some close ham friends. From there, we clipped the northeast corner of Arkansas, cut through Tennessee, Kentucky, and West Virginia, and pushed through the New England states. Following the rugged Maine coastline, we drove up through New Brunswick (NB) to Halifax, Nova Scotia (NS). There, we met up with our two adult sons, who flew in from LAX.

The next day, the four of us boarded a flight to St. John's, NL. To simplify travel, we left our SUV in Halifax and rented a car in St. John's. We spent the next 12 days exploring Newfoundland, including our ultimate destination: Fogo Island, NL. After flying back to Halifax, we spent five days touring Nova Scotia as a family. We then dropped our sons off at the airport for their return flight to California, and JoAnn and I began the long drive back to the West Coast.

A Brief List of the Trip Highlights

Everything about this trip was amazing and memorable. Here are just a few of the highlights:

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Oatman, Arizona: A well-preserved old Route 66 town featuring famous wild donkeys (burros) who act as the stars of the town. They still freely roam the streets, mingle with visitors, and beg for treats.

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Tucumcari, New Mexico: Staying at the Route 66 classic Blue Swallow Motel and enjoying all of the town's vibrant neon lights. Further down the road in Carthage, Missouri, we stayed at the recently restored Boots Court Motel—another Route 66 classic with beautiful neon lighting.

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Branson, Missouri: A fantastic side trip! We loved visiting the massive Titanic Museum and cruising down the main highway through the flashing neon lights of the famous, "Las Vegas-style" theater district.

Springfield, Missouri: Enjoying dinners with ham radio friends Bob, KC0ZRX, and Anne, KD0JNT, and visiting the Wonders of Wildlife National Museum & Aquarium, developed by the founder of Bass Pro Shops (wow).

I also had the thrill of hooking up my QRP Labs QMX+ to Bob's SteppIR beam up at 60 feet and making an easy SSB QSO.

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Lexington, Kentucky: A perfect mix of horses and bourbon! Our expert tour guide knew everything about thoroughbred horses and provided incredible access to the farms, barns, horses, and even their newborn foals. Our guide also provided us with peppermints to hand-feed the horses, who clearly enjoyed the exchange as much as we did. Next, we headed to Woodford Reserve for their "Path to Flavor" distillery tour. It was all about the water, grain, fermentation, distillation, and maturation, concluding with a classroom-type tasting at the end of the tour. We learned a lot and were rewarded with a sampling of their different products, accompanied by thorough descriptions of each one.

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Gettysburg Battlefield, Pennsylvania: A deeply moving and excellent tour through the rolling hills and historic monuments of the National Military Park, offering a much clearer understanding of the pivotal battles fought here from July 1-3, 1863.

Boothbay, Maine: Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens. We loved having a volunteer shuttle us through the gorgeous grounds to find all five of the giant wooden trolls, who are hidden along the forest paths as the mythical "Guardians of the Seeds."

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St. John's, NL: We thoroughly enjoyed the “Screech-in” ceremony at Christian's Pub in St. John's. Getting "screeched-in" is a famous, fun-filled initiation ceremony that turns visitors into honorary Newfoundlanders. The ritual requires you to recite a specific dialect, take a shot of Newfoundland Screech (rum), eat a slice of bologna, and kiss a codfish.

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Bonavista, NL: We were incredibly eager to see those cute puffins, and the area around Bonavista is one of the best places to find them. Unfortunately, they had not yet arrived in large numbers, but we did spot some, and the coastal landscape was absolutely beautiful.

Fogo Island, NL: Our three days here were definitely one of the main highlights of the entire trip. On our first night, we joined some of the locals at a traditional "shed party." The next day, we hiked to Joe Batt's Point to see the life-sized bronze statue of the extinct Great Auk. It was wonderful just to be in such a unique and remote part of the world.

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Bay of Fundy, Nova Scotia: Walking right out onto the ocean floor during the highest tide change (54 feet) in the world.

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The Travel Rig

Because we were splitting our time between driving and sightseeing, quick deployments were important. Most days, my setup and teardown took a mere 5 to 10 minutes, with operating sessions usually lasting 30 minutes or less. When we had the luxury of staying somewhere for two or three days, I would string up my 41-foot EFRW (End-Fed Random Wire) to maximize my time on the air.

My primary mobile setup consisted of:

Yaesu FT-991A, 100-watt transceiver.

A 17-foot whip with a quick-release adapter fastened to a roof-mounted mag-mount, with additional stability provided by two 5-pound shot bags.

A Windows 11 laptop running N1MM+ with CAT control for logging all of our POTA and general QSOs.

The Battery Challenge: Flying from Halifax to St. John's meant adhering to strict airline regulations: a maximum of two lithium batteries, capped at 160 watt-hours (Wh) each. This meant my main 12V 20Ah LiFePO4 battery couldn't make the trip. To bypass this, I purchased two airline-compliant 12V 10Ah LiFePO4 batteries (120 Wh each). By wiring them in parallel upon arrival, I

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was able to safely run my 100-watt rig at full power while operating in NL.

Operating Highlights

While the entire trip was memorable, several specific activations truly stood out.

Cape Spear Lighthouse National Historic Site (CA-4816) - NL

Since our theme was "Chasing the Edge of North America," activating the easternmost point of the continent was an absolute must. To add to the drama, Mother Nature greeted us with freezing, stormy weather. To keep the 17-foot whip from blowing off the rented SUV, I had to rig multiple guy lines in the howling wind. Despite the brutal conditions, I endured the elements to log 13 CW and 8 SSB contacts. We had officially activated the park right from the edge of the continent!

Tilting National Historic Site (CA-5392) - Fogo Island, NL

This remote location is the only POTA site on Fogo Island. Over the last three years, it had only been activated six times for a total of 269 QSOs - none of which were on CW. On two consecutive evenings, I managed to complete two activations, netting 55 CW QSOs and 110 SSB contacts. The site is culturally significant, permanently settled by Irish immigrants in the 1720s. Today, it remains inhabited by descendants who preserve the original structures, oral traditions, and a distinct Irish dialect. In a stroke of radio magic, I had a wonderful QSO with Ronan, EI2IJB, located on

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Ireland's west coast. I told him about the deep Irish heritage of my operating location. My son captured the entire exchange on video, and I look forward to emailing a copy to Ronan soon.

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Fundy National Park (CA-0025) - New Brunswick (NB)

We stayed three nights in a chalet at the Fundy Highlands Motel & Chalets, which is located directly inside the boundaries of Fundy National Park. I was able to put up my 41-foot EFRW antenna and operate right from the dining table inside our chalet! Since we were inside the park, all of my QSOs counted as POTA contacts, and I managed to operate in the 1900 and 0300 CWTs from here as well. Another major highlight was activating the Saltwater Pool and Bathhouse Historic Site (CA-6455), which was only a short two-mile drive from where we were staying. This park had never been activated before; I had the distinct honor of being the very first one.

Cape Bonavista Lighthouse Historic Site (CA-6290) - Bonavista, NL

This was an early evening POTA activation where I was able to park right next to the lighthouse. Over the past two years, this site had only seen six activations and a total of 73 QSOs, with zero CW contacts on record. Not unexpectedly, I ran into a massive pileup and logged 93 QSOs—including 15 on CW—during my one-hour activation. Plus, we had dozens of puffins flying around us the entire time we were operating!

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Nevada Northern Railway Museum State Historic Site (US-13249) - Ely, Nevada

Although the radio conditions were pretty awful with heavy QRN, this site was incredible. The well-preserved depot was built in 1907, and much of the railroad yard and historical equipment remains completely intact. There is a great museum and a monument to their beloved, famous former shop cat named "Dirt." If you Google "Dirt the cat," you can read all about this legendary feline.

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Camden Hills State Park (US-2384) - Camden, Maine

This is a gorgeous park sitting on top of the 800-foot Mount Battie, overlooking the town of Camden along the Maine coastline. It is everything you would ever want in a scenic POTA location.

Final Log Notes:

Along our route, we successfully activated a total of 55 POTA parks, including at least one in all 28 states and 3 provinces that we visited. In addition, I participated in 10 of the CWops Wednesday operating events. In total, I made over 2,000 QSOs during our travels! These contacts were absolute highlights of a truly unforgettable road trip! We completed our 12,000-mile journey by arriving safely back in California on June 16, 2026. With 49 states now in the log, it is time to start planning our route north to Alaska.

Thanks to everyone who chased us to the edge of North America!

73, Jim , W6KC *and JoAnn,* K6FBI

QRV: CWops DX

Bill Salyers, AJ8B

This month, our guest is Pia Wurster, DL7PIA, also known as CWops member #3698. Here is a bit about our guest from her QRZ.com web page:

On July 8, 2019, I passed the exam for the amateur radio license class A (full license) at first attempt at the age of 12.

It was in late 2018 when I took my first steps in amateur radio. From the very first moment on I was fascinated by this exciting way of communicating and I decided to try to get my amateur radio license as soon as possible.

During the preparation for the exam I worked with the educational call sign DN1PIA. I'm very glad to be now a little part of the big world of amateur radio and look forward to meeting you on the bands with my own call sign: DL7PIA!

Amateur radio is much more for me than a hobby, it's my passion and a very important part of my life.

In June 2026 I also passed the US amateur radio license, my US call sign is KR4NHR.

You are CWops member #3698. Who got you into CWops?

I was introduced into CWops in February 2025 by Bill, W2CQ, who initially nominated me. Additionally, I was sponsored by Bruce, NJ3K, Heijo, DJ1OJ and Lutz, DM6EE. I am very happy and grateful to be a member of CWops, already for more than one year now!

Did CWops have a major impact on your love of CW?

My love for CW began long before I became a member of CWops. Everything started at the age of 5, when I watched a documentary about Morse code and the life of Samuel Finley B. Morse on television. I was impressed and amazed by the Morse code and I wanted to learn it. So I asked a family member to write down the whole Morse code for me. That was the beginning of my endless love for CW, my favourite mode. After I passed my amateur radio license in 2019, I finally started to get on the air in CW in 2022. For me operating in CW is like being in another world, it's like beautiful music in my ears.

Did the CWTs help you when it came time to hit the POTA activations and contests?

I had already participated in many contests and made many portable operations before I became a member of CWops and before I participated in my first CWT. But I have to say that CWTs are really great for practice and for improving your skills. The CWTs are a great opportunity to keep in shape for contests and other activations through the year. It's always a lot of fun to participate and so great to meet there old and new friends!

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How has CW helped or enhanced your desire to BE DX instead of just working DX?

Whenever I work a DXpedition in CW, I hear the massive pileups and I think to myself that it must be a really special and great feeling when it seems like the whole world wants to work you. Such a pileup of a DX station in CW is truly something very special, and I think it's also a motivation for every enthusiastic CW operator to be the DX yourself. I was able to experience this feeling on a smaller scale, when I was on the air in CW from HB0, the Principality of Liechtenstein.

What would you tell a ham who is considering learning CW?

I would tell someone who wants to learn CW: if you want to learn CW, just do it and start with it. First learn the different characters (there are different possibilities to do that, like participating in online courses), listen to CW to get used to the sound and to common abbreviations and get familiar with your Morse key. Then just start making QSOs in CW. It doesn't matter how fast you are giving at the beginning; just start with a speed you are feeling comfortable with. You will get more and more practice in giving and also in listening. The most important thing is, that you are having fun and that you are enjoying operating CW.

Do you have any other comments about CW or CWops?

CWops is truly a fantastic organization that does a lot to get more amateur radio operators excited about CW. For example, through the CW Academy, where beginners and also more experienced CW operators have the opportunity to learn CW or improve their skills depending on their level and also with the weekly CWTs .

About CW in general I would like to say, that it is a wonderful mode and we should try to do everything we can, to keep this fantastic mode alive. Of course, this means that we'll keep CW alive as a mode, run by real OMs and YLs, and not just by machines and AI. Experienced operators, such as CWops members often help less experienced operators and beginners by adjusting for example their CW giving speed, they can adapt to the skills of their QSO partners. I think this can also help to motivate operators, who don't have much practice yet in CW to continue and to have a lot of fun with this fantastic mode. After all, today's beginners will become tomorrow's experienced CW operators with the support from all of us.

CW Open – September 5, 2026

The session times will be as follows:

Session 1: 00:00 UTC, Sept 5

Session 2: 12:00 UTC, Sept 5

Session 3: 20:00 UTC, Sept 5

Event web page

New Members

Trung Nguyen, W6TN

With great pleasure we welcome the following new members to CWops:

CWops	Call	Name
3944	WC9C*	Dean
3945	K2DXO*	Nat
3946	W4BD*	Mark
3947	W4EMW*	Ed
3948	KN6UDK*	Bill
3949	VA3UZ*	Tim
3950	N6MIV*	Marlin
3951	G4ETK*	Chris
3952	DL2AJ*	Dile
3953	G4YBU*	Tim
3954	KD2UBJ*	Rich
3955	KE2AIZ*	Maggie
3956	SQ2MO*	Mike
3957	WA7SPY*	Glenn
3958	DL9PK	Phil
3959	G5RRR*	Nick
3960	N7WMN*	David
3961	KK4DX*	Lance
3962	N1JD*	John
3963	AC9M*	Josh
3964	W2KS*	Ken
3965	VE1KM	Jim
3966	KG1A*	Tom
3967	KK7D*	Mike
3968	K2DP*	Dave

* Lifetime member

As of July 7, 2026:

Need Sponsors: IT9IVU, PD1RDY, SM3NRY, WA3N

Invitations Extended: (none at this time)

For more details about nominees and up-to-date status, check the "Members only" page on the website. For information about joining CWops, check the "Membership" page on the website.

Notes: If you have updated your personal info, e.g., new QTH, new callsign, or additional callsign, please send it to membership@cwops.org so I can add it to the roster. Vice versa, if your callsign becomes inactive I can remove it, too. Then the roster will be accurate and current for our usage.

73, Trung **W6TN** (CWops #1707)
Membership Manager

Did your **CALL SIGN** change recently?

Did you move to a **NEW ADDRESS** or change your **NAME** ?

Congratulations!

Help us keep our **DATABASE UP-TO-DATE**

Click HERE to update your contact information.

Giving Back Update

Rob Brownstein, K6RB (CWops #3)

CWops' Giving Back (GB) program is meant to provide on-air QSO experience and practice for anyone who wants it. It was initially intended as a way for our CW Academy students to get some on-air experience. We all know that when there is activity on the bands, these days, it's usually a DXpedition pileup or a contest. Today's CW aspirants have had little chance to work others who are skilled at CW, operate at moderate speed, and are committed to helping. That's the mission of Giving Back. The GB volunteers get on the air at approximately 7 pm local time and seek out CQers, or call CQ, and engage in routine QSOs including some conversational tidbits. The operators' schedule appears on the next page.

Here are the June 2026 results (GB hosts are shown in **bold**):

GW2CWO	EA3EYC	CT7BMY	M7HDX	LA5PUA	G4OBB	MW5RRP	
JG1UQD	JS2TGK JH2TGK	VK4JU JF1LXO	JA2MOG JA6GLB	JQ3GAJ JL1DZP	JI1PBJ JL2SQK	JE1FMZ	JI3DHY
JJ1FXF	JL1FYL R0LGR	JS2TGK(4) JM1MKH	JL2SQK	7N1OEX	JA1LNQ	JJ0SFV	JA4IIJ(2)
JK1QYL	JQ3GAJ JE1HMS JE3DXP JL2SQK	JJ0SFV(2) JG1BGT(3) JA2MEI JF0SCH	JS1QIZ KE7LOY ZL2F	JK1WCW JA1LNQ R0LGR	JS2TGK(10) JA7WTH JI1CJJ	JF1LXO JK7LJR JR6SBI	JK1PWT JI1PBJ JR4CXE
JM4AOA	JE6AJO	JK1WCW	UC0L				
JO1DGE	7L2VPL JF2EVE JL1DZP JS3MQC/3	BI4JAD JG1BGT(2) JL2SQK(2) KE7LOY	JA4IIJ JI3DHY(2) JQ3GAJ(2) R0CC	JA6GLB JJ0SFV JQ6EQD	JE2OUK JK1NPB/1 JR3RHI	JE3DXP(2) JK1PWT JR4CXE	JF1LXO JK1WCW JS2TGK(8)
JQ3FRX	JK1WCW	JJ0SFV	JA2VXZ	JL2SQK	JF2EVE	JK1WCW	JS2TGK
K1DW	KI5VIR VE3GND K1PUG	DL6ED AA9MU	W4EZR KC8D	KR4ANA W0HXL	VA3DLU WB5HOW	KM4JEG KG5EED	OA4DKN K4DH
K7NJ	KD2FSH	KD7CHF	KW7WP	AE6GD	K0JOM		
M0WDD	DK6JK	G4HPH	GM0HKS	M0IYP			
N9EEE	WA20TC	VE3ZDO	KA4WUS	ABOBM	W3JRB	N3JJT	
W8OV	WB2FUV	N4RT	W5PB				
7L2VPL	JL1ING JS2TGK N8AI JI1CJJ	JA9LNB JA5DTR/3 JS2TGK AA6MU	JG1BGT PP5WX KE7LOY JF1LXO	JH0NFJ K7WCN R0LGR JA4IIJ	JG1BGT VK3AXH R0LIX JL3TII	RA0JT JS2TGK BA4SUA	JA1SYI KG5AQV JA4IIJ
7N2XZB	JF1LXO(2) HL1MIM(2) DS1PCF	JL1DZP JE3DXP BG2TFW	JS2TGK(10) BH5ELC JE7RMT	R0LIX JK1PWT(2) BI4JCR	JQ3GAJ(6) JI3DHY	JA4IIJ(2) JH0NFT	7N1OEX JJ0SFV

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Giving Back Operating Schedule - 7 PM Local

October - April: 40m & 80m | May - September: 40m & 20m

Frequencies: 7.035 - 7.039, 3.535 - 3.539, 14.035 - 14.039 MHz | JA - 7.028 +/-

UTC+10	UTC+9	UTC+7	UTC+3	UTC+2	UTC+1	UTC/BST	UTC-1	New York UTC-4	Chicago UTC-5	Denver UTC-6	Los Angeles UTC-7	Hawaii UTC-10
MON												
VK1CWO	JØ1DGE							W2XS	W8OV			
	JG1GBT											
TUE												
	7N2XZB	E25JRP		SV2BBK		GW2CWO		WE5P	K8UDH	K7NJ	W7ZDX	
	JR1WYW											
WED												
	7J1ATG							N8DD			N7DZ	
THURS												
	7N2XZB			SV2BBK				KV8Q	N9EEE	K7NJ		
	JG1BGT											
	JQ3FRX											
FRI												
	JK1QYL			SV2BBK		GW2CWO					K6RB	
						MØWDD						
SAT												
	JJ1FXF							W5DT				
	JM4AOA											
	JG1UQD											
SUN												
	JJ1FXF							W5DT				
	JM4AOA											
	7L1VPL											

CW Academy

Bob Carter, WR7Q and Roland Smith, K7OJL

Student Success Tracking

Having been in management in corporate America for too many years and an advisor for CW Academy for the last eleven, one thing that has been most effective for me is to have employees/students "return & report". It is always easier to say your going to do something than do it.

We now have on our website, standardized curriculums for all four levels in CWA, so everyone can see what is required and what needs to be done.

I found early on it was not an effective use of class time to have each of the students report how they did on their homework for the last three days. So, I developed a comprehensive question and answer form in 'Google Docs' to have the students complete and return to me every week a few hours before class. This gives me time to collect their data and determine how they are progressing...or not!!

I have been using this since 2022 with great success. Example...here are typical responses to the questions from the same students at the end of semester class evaluations:

Q: What do you dislike the most about the course?

A: Filling out the Homework Report!

Q: What do you think was most effect?

A: Filling out the Homework Report!

Why? Because they know I am going to ask them for it in class. It "forces" them to complete the homework on a daily basis, so "life does not get in the way!"

Now to the good news. One of our students suggested that we let AI turn this into a more automated process. He and I have worked together to develop a "Beta" process to test out the effectiveness of this process and see where it leads us. So far, we have come up with some amazing results.

Intermediate curriculum is online with check marks to indicate completion of each task.

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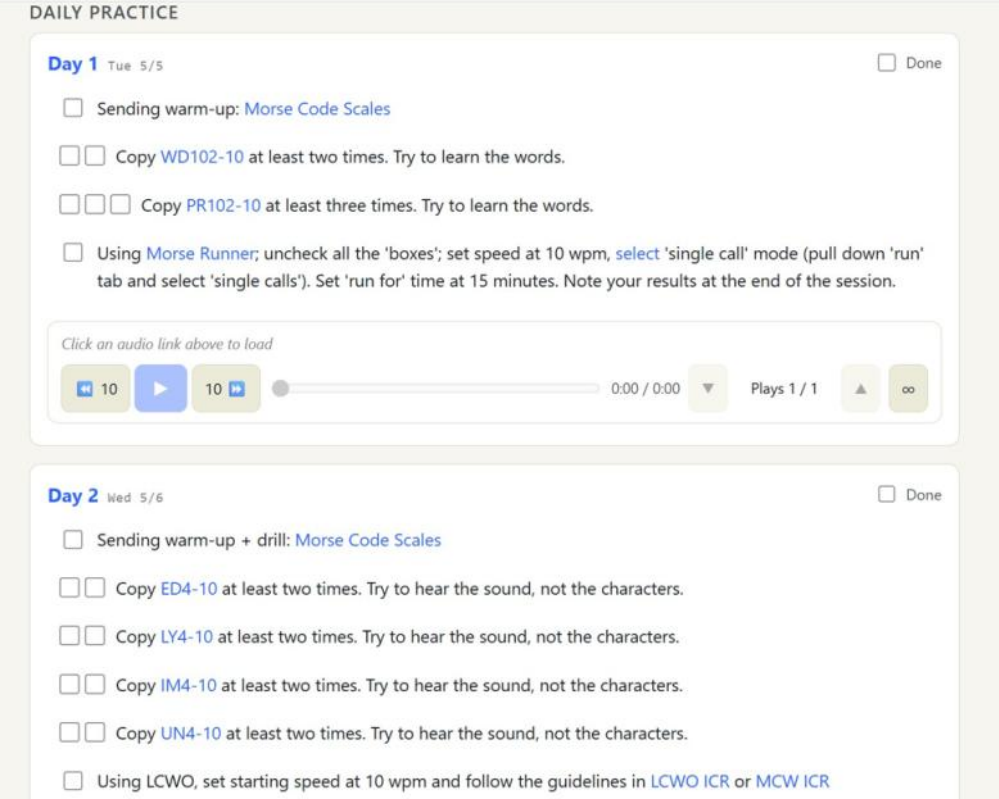
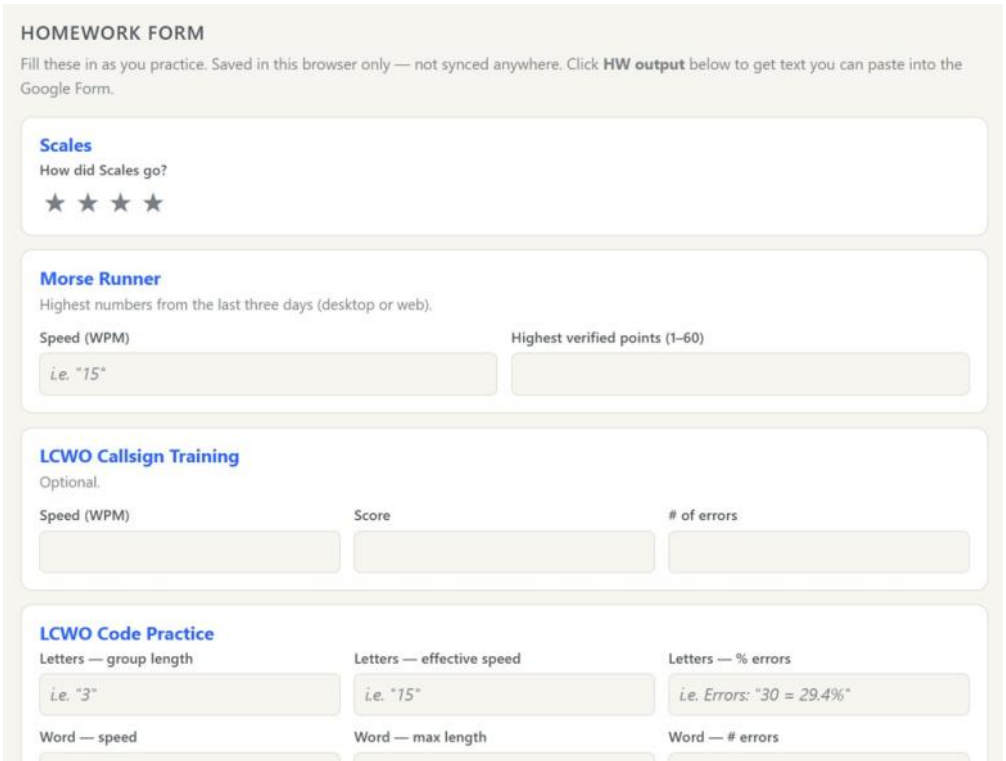
Here are the Scales and some Short File exercises:



Here the reporting form on Scales and LCWO



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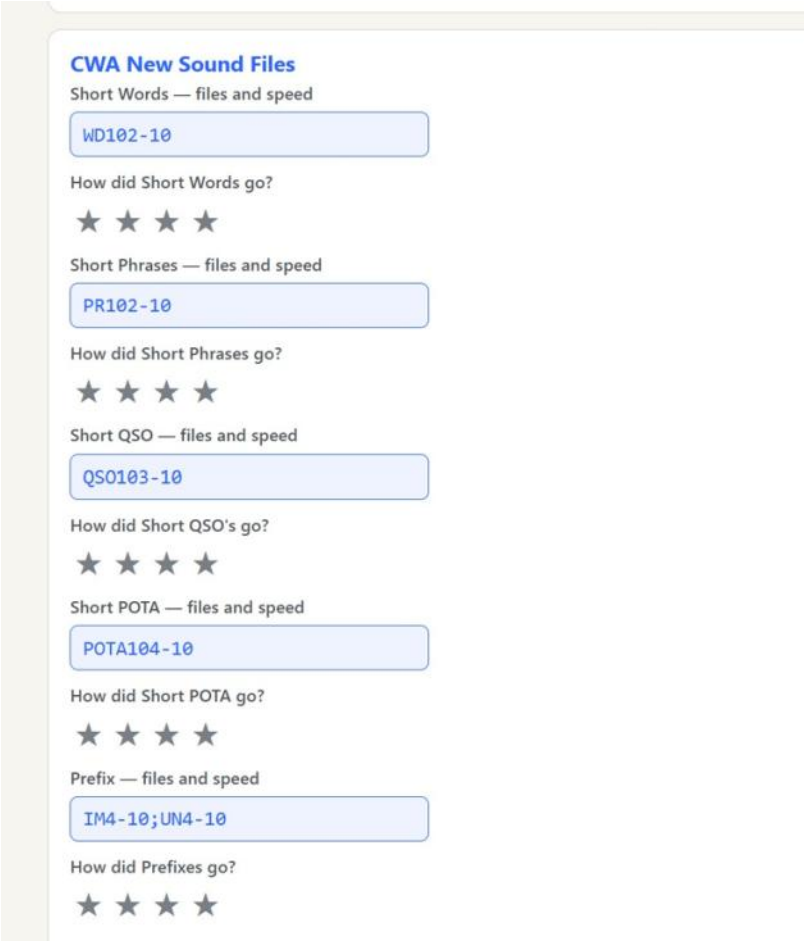
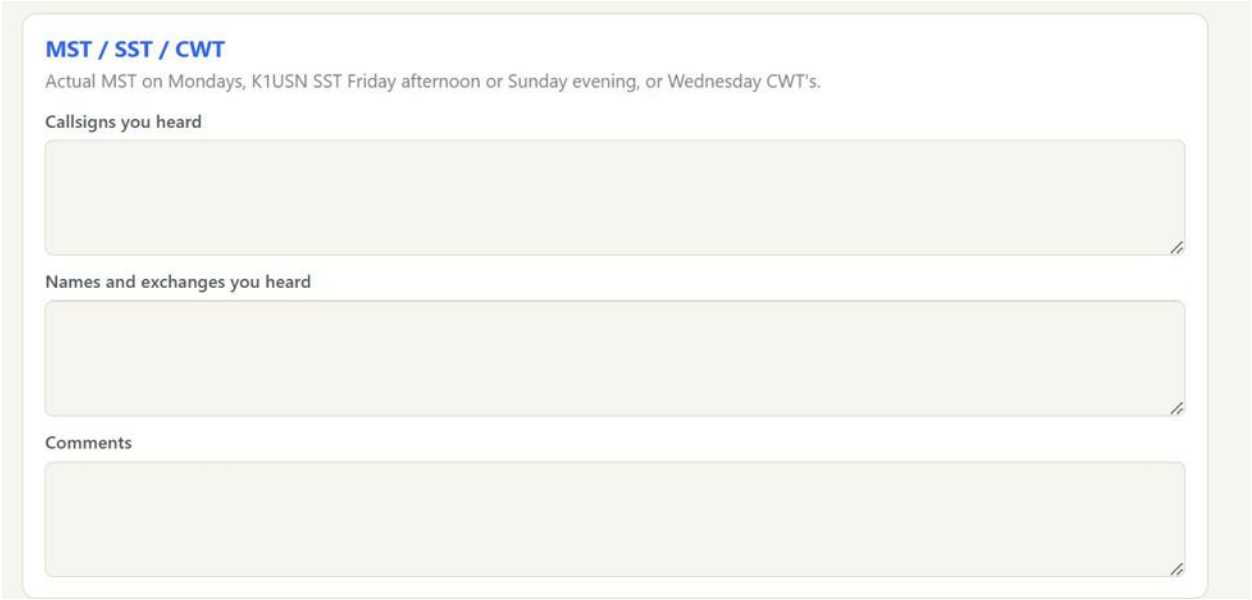
Comfort level on the Short Files, prefixes and suffixes



Results of participated contests this week



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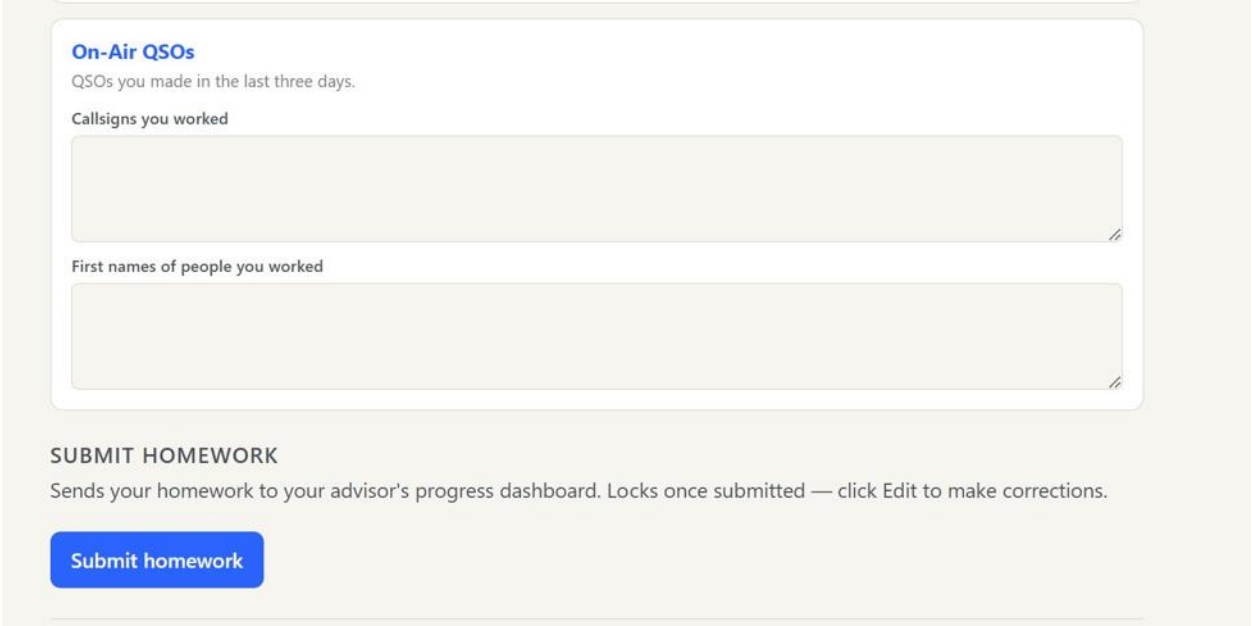
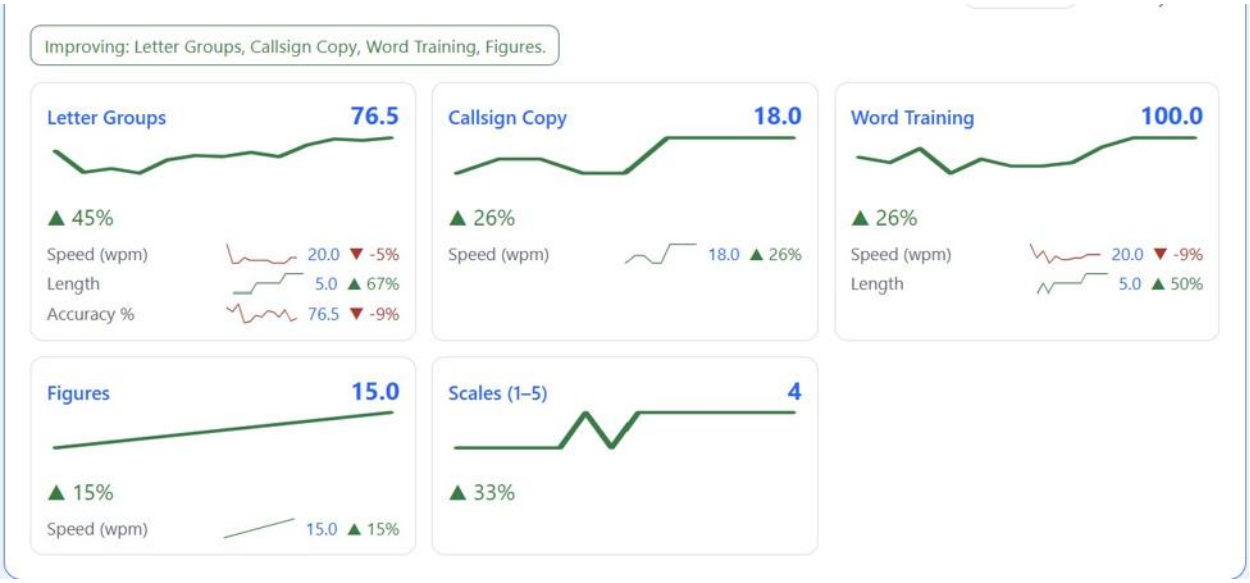
QSO's you worked: (Submit the report)



Analytics – charting how the students are progressing:



We are still finishing the development of Beginner; Fundamental; and Advanced and several additional processes.

If this proves to be useful to the advisors and students, we may provide the options to develop your own homework questions from your personal curriculums and other features that may be beneficial. More to come…

***73, Bob,* WR7Q** (CWops #1423) CWA Admin

CWops Tests (CWTs)

Rich Ferch, VE3KI

This column is mostly a repeat of my column for July 2025 with updated figures for comparison with last year's.

As of July 1, we had completed 102 of this year's 210 CWT sessions. The only member who has reported scores in all of the CWTs so far is K4PQC.

In total, there were 24,498 claimed CWT scores reported to 3830scores.com in the first half of this year (compared with 25,430 during the same period last year), with a total of 1,438,851 reported QSOs. The median score is 46 QSOs, while the arithmetic average of all submitted scores is 58.7 QSOs.

The most popular of the four CWT sessions continues to be the 1900z session, with an average of 351 participants in each 1900z CWT, almost unchanged from last year. The 1300z session is next with an average so far this year of 331.6 participants (up slightly from 327.5 at this time last year). The 0300z session is considerably less popular and continues to decrease in popularity, with an average of 201 participants (versus 219 at this time last year, a decrease of 9%), while the 0700z session has had an average participation so far this year of 85 (up from last year's figure of 81).

The monthly average numbers for the first six months for each session are tabulated below. The numbers in parentheses are the year-over-year percentage changes from last year's numbers.

	1300z	1900z	0300z	0700z
January 2026	329 (+1%)	359 (-0.4%)	219 (-15%)	79 (-2%)
February 2026	344 (-+1%)	379 (-1%)	229 (-10%)	93 (+12%)
March 2026	320 (-4%)	346 (-3%)	194 (-10%)	87 (+6%)
April 2026	335 (+6%)	352 (+8%)	188 (-3%)	83 (+4%)
May 2026	330 (+2%)	343 (+1%)	191 (-1%)	91 (+6%)
June 2026	331 (+0.4%)	328 (-4%)	198 (-1%)	83 (+5%)

Participation in the 1300z and 1900z sessions appears to have stabilized, and at 0700z there has been an encouraging growth since last year. However, participation in the 0300z session continues to drop. In fact, the participation numbers for 0300z have shown year-over-year decreases every month since November 2022, with only one small exception (a 1% increase in September 2024 relative to the previous year). There are no doubt multiple reasons for the continuing decline in participation at 0300z, among them steadily worsening propagation conditions at this point in the solar cycle. It's probably not a cause for alarm yet, but it merits continued monitoring.

Enjoy the CWTs and keep those reported scores coming!

73, Rich **VE3KI** (CWops #783)
CWT Manager

CWops Member Awards

Bill Gilliland, WØTG

Monthly Update

During June, six additional members submitted logs, increasing the number of active participants in the awards program to 214.

The **ACA** QSO totals and rankings for the end of June 2026 have **KR2Q** in first place and leading second place **AA3B** by 128 QSOs. The top ten ACA totals this month are: **(1**) **KR2Q, (2) AA3B, (3) KY4GS, (4) K3WW, (5) N5RZ, (6) F6HKA, (7) KO4VW, (8) KC7V, (9) NA8V** and **(10) KG9X.** The separation between first place and tenth place is 492 QSOs.

The **ACMA** QSO totals and rankings for the end of June 2026 have **AA3B** in first place and leading second place **KR2Q** by 499 QSOs. The top ten ACMA totals this month are: **(1**) **AA3B, (2) KR2Q, (3) K3WW, (4) N5RZ, (5) KY4GS, (6) KC7V, (7) OM2VL, (8) NA8V, (9) K7QA** and **(10) KO4VW.** The separation between first place and tenth place is 1744 QSOs.

The **CMA** QSO totals and rankings for the end of June 2026 have **AA3B** in first place and leading second place **K3WW** by 3620 QSOs. The top ten CMA totals this month are: **(1**) **AA3B, (2) K3WW, (3) KR2Q, (4) N5RZ, (5) N5ZO, (6) DL6KVA, (7) NA8V, (8) F6HKA, (9) W1RM** and **(10) OM2VL**. The separation between first place and tenth place is 6801 QSOs.

The number of participants who have contacted CWops members in 100 or more **DXCC** entities remained at 103 this month.

The number of participants who have accomplished CWops **WAS** remained at **291** this month**.**

You can see complete rankings for all award categories at https://cwops.telegraphy.de/scores.

CWops Award Tools Participation

At the end of 2025 we had 297 active participants in the Member Awards Program. As of July 1, 2026, we have 214 active participants. If you have not submitted any logs for the Awards Program, please submit them so we can include your scores among the participants.

The Top 100 and the Searchable and Sortable Scores Table show rankings and scores for active participants only. To be an active participant and be included in awards scoring including the ACA, ACMA and CMA competitions, you must have submitted a log during the current year.

To see rankings and scores for both active and inactive participants please use the Score Overview Table where inactive participants are listed with ACA and ACMA scores of zero, but their scores in other categories are listed at the highest level that was previously submitted.

You can see the final 2025 scores or final scores for any other year by going to the Score Overview Table and selecting the desired year from the "Final scores:" list at the top of the page.

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All scores categories on the page will then show the final scores and standings for the end of the selected year.

The Searchable and Sortable Table can graph your current year's ACA scores by date and allows you to compare your progression to that of others. Check the Plot button for the calls you wish to see plotted and they will all appear on the same graph.

The CWops Award Tools website main page provides a means of printing your CWT Participation Certificate. You may request a downloadable certificate by clicking the "CWT certificate download" selection at the top of the page. For more information about CWT Participation Awards, please go to https://cwops.org/cwops-tests/.

CWops Member Awards Program Overview

Several operating awards are available for contacting CWops members. These include **Annual Competition Award** (**ACA**) recognizing the total number of CWops members contacted during the current year, **Annual Cumulative Membership Award** (**ACMA**) counting QSOs with members on all bands (once per band) during the current year, **Cumulative Membership Award** (**CMA**) counting QSOs with members on all bands (once per band) since January 3, 2010, **CWops WAS** award for contacting members in all 50 states, **CWops DXCC** award for contacting members in countries on the ARRL DXCC list, **CWops WAE** award for contacting members in Europe, and **CWops WAZ** award for contacting members in each of the 40 CQ zones. All contacts must be via CW and between current CWops members. To qualify for these awards, you must submit your logs via the tool at the CWops Award Tools website . You can also print out your awards certificates at that same website.

A set of tools for managing your awards status is provided on the CWops Award Tools website and if you regularly upload your logs your awards will be automatically tracked for you. To view complete data for all currently active participants and see where you and others rank among active participants in the awards program, use the online tools. For more details on the tools provided, see the August 2021 *Solid Copy* article.

Please Join Us!

Fabian, DJ5CW, who created the website and the tools, made it extremely easy to participate in the awards program.

If you are not among the CWops members who are currently participating, please join us! It adds a lot of friendly competition and fun to your operating.

More Information

View our website for more information on the CWops Awards Program. Send your feedback, questions or comments to cwopscam@w0tg.com.

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Here are the Top 100 ACA, ACMA and CMA QSO totals as of July 1, 2026.

ACA

Rank	Call	ACA
1	KR2Q	1574
2	AA3B	1446
3	KY4GS	1341
4	K3WW	1232
5	N5RZ	1194
6	F6HKA	1165
7	KO4VW	1122
8	KC7V	1095
9	NA8V	1094
10	KG9X	1082
11	K7QA	1063
12	W4CMG	1061
13	OM2VL	1058
14	N7US	1055
15	WT9U	1043
16	N5TJ	1003
17	W8FN	991
18	K3QP	962
19	KT5V	925
20	AA2IL	913
21	NA4J	888
22	K1AJ	876
23	EA6EJ	842
24	K6NR	832
25	K9WX	829
25	N5KD	829
26	DL6KVA	825
26	VE3TM	825
27	N4DW	808
28	WS7L	807
29	KW1X	805
30	K3JT	797
31	VK2GR	792
32	KC3M	791
33	KM4FO	790
34	K1VUT	786
35	K1SM	777
36	WN7S	760
37	NJ3K	758
38	W9ILY	706
39	KW7Q	695
40	N2UU	694
41	W0UO	685

ACMA

Rank	Call	ACMA
1	AA3B	4361
2	KR2Q	3862
3	K3WW	3410
4	N5RZ	3265
5	KY4GS	3128
6	KC7V	2935
7	OM2VL	2780
8	NA8V	2765
9	K7QA	2644
10	KO4VW	2617
11	WT9U	2529
12	KG9X	2494
13	F6HKA	2414
14	W4CMG	2294
15	N7US	2292
16	N5TJ	2182
17	W8FN	1975
18	K1AJ	1923
19	EA6EJ	1913
20	DL6KVA	1884
21	NA4J	1848
22	WS7L	1792
23	AA2IL	1768
24	K6NR	1714
25	K1VUT	1708
26	N4DW	1688
27	KT5V	1650
28	K9WX	1588
29	KW7Q	1530
30	N5KD	1493
31	KM4FO	1475
32	KC3M	1461
33	N2UU	1448
34	N5XE	1446
35	VE3TM	1440
36	K3QP	1437
37	WN7S	1388
38	K3JT	1378
39	KW1X	1377
40	VK2GR	1350
41	W0VX	1330
42	W0UO	1319
43	NJ3K	1284

CMA

Rank	Call	CMA
1	AA3B	15551
2	K3WW	11931
3	KR2Q	11086
4	N5RZ	11083
5	N5ZO	10698
6	DL6KVA	10561
7	NA8V	10128
8	F6HKA	9700
9	W1RM	9691
10	OM2VL	8750
11	VE3KI	8407
12	KG9X	8342
13	KC7V	8321
14	K7QA	8281
15	N7US	8146
16	N5AW	7801
17	W9ILY	7760
18	WT9U	7642
19	KY4GS	7440
20	N4DW	7390
21	K1VUT	7298
22	W0VX	7230
23	K3JT	7090
24	N5TJ	7016
25	K9WX	6942
26	K6NR	6602
27	W4WF	6525
28	N1DC	6349
29	SM6CUK	6330
30	WT3K	6303
31	N2UU	6280
32	WN7S	6206
33	K4IU	6143
34	KO4VW	6116
35	W8FN	6015
36	AA5JF	5827
37	9A1AA	5793
38	VE3TM	5753
39	W0UO	5670
40	NJ3K	5611
41	G4BUE	5571
42	AC6ZM	5544
43	K1SM	5543

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ACA

42	K3ZA	675
43	KR3E	674
44	F5SGI	664
45	N5XE	655
46	N9FZ	643
47	W4WF	639
48	DF7TV	629
49	K1TR	626
50	WU6P	613
51	K4TZ	608
52	W1RM	605
53	VE9KK	604
54	W0VX	601
55	SM6CUK	599
55	W5AL	599
56	K4PQC	597
57	EA6BF	588
58	VE3KIU	587
59	W9CF	583
60	N1DC	579
61	KC4WQ	574
62	W6AYC	571
63	N5AW	570
64	K4IU	568
65	EA3NO	563
66	N2EIM	562
67	NE2V	557
68	VE3KI	551
69	AA5JF	548
70	ZS1C	547
71	N5ER	535
72	KK0U	531
73	KY0Q	528
74	NE5A	523
75	KV8Q	517
76	K4GM	511
77	WT3K	492
78	N3CKI	489
79	WE4AUB	481
80	WB2FKO	466
81	M0RYB	462
82	WA4JUK	461
83	W2VM	460
84	KB8GAE	458
85	K9CW	457
86	KC9IL	453
87	G3NKC	437
88	HB9ARF	427
89	K1RF	426

ACMA

44	K1SM	1265
45	W9ILY	1234
46	EA6BF	1209
47	F5SGI	1207
48	W5AL	1188
49	SM6CUK	1186
50	W9CF	1173
51	K3ZA	1149
52	K4PQC	1145
53	K1TR	1135
54	W4WF	1124
54	K4IU	1124
55	WU6P	1120
56	N5AW	1109
57	W6AYC	1067
58	VE3KIU	1048
59	ZS1C	1046
60	N9FZ	1037
61	N5ER	1031
62	KR3E	1030
63	K4TZ	1023
63	AA5JF	1023
64	KY0Q	1016
65	DF7TV	994
66	VE9KK	983
67	KC4WQ	965
68	VE3KI	946
69	NE2V	932
70	G3NKC	930
71	W1RM	919
72	N1DC	910
73	K9CW	906
74	EA3NO	904
75	WS1L	899
76	M0RYB	879
77	K4GM	875
78	W0TG	873
79	WB2FKO	832
80	KV8Q	821
81	WE4AUB	811
82	AF5J	796
83	KK0U	784
84	KC3MAL	772
85	N3CKI	767
86	DJ5CW	758
87	LY2MM	754
88	WA5RML	752
89	K1RF	748
90	G4PVM	733

CMA

44	NA4J	5531
45	N5XE	5447
46	AA2IL	5442
47	K1AJ	5438
48	GW0ETF	5332
49	KT5V	5139
50	WS7L	5113
51	K3QP	5036
52	VK2GR	5033
53	F6JOE	4999
54	WA4JUK	4946
55	K4GM	4895
56	W4CMG	4892
57	DF7TV	4872
58	DM6EE	4868
59	EA6BF	4815
60	OK1RR	4790
61	KC4WQ	4667
62	VE3MV	4618
63	DJ5CW	4608
64	OZ3SM	4607
65	KM4FO	4602
66	N5KD	4568
67	W6AYC	4545
68	F5SGI	4483
69	KY0Q	4383
70	KW7Q	4284
71	WS1L	4277
72	W0TG	4260
73	G4PVM	4244
74	EA6EJ	4242
75	WU6P	4241
76	AF5J	4163
77	K0TC	4132
78	KK0U	4121
79	KV8Q	4119
80	NE2V	4075
81	NE5A	4069
82	W3WHK	4063
83	W2CDO	4060
84	N1EN	4034
85	M0RYB	4020
86	KR3E	4001
87	KC3M	3865
88	SM0HEV	3805
89	N3CKI	3777
90	K4TZ	3759
91	HB9ARF	3703
92	K3ZA	3672

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ACA

90	W3WHK	424
91	KM4JEG	419
92	KC3MAL	415
93	N5ZO	414
94	W7LG	412
95	WS1L	410
96	LY2MM	405
97	AF5J	402
97	W0TG	402
98	WA5RML	397
99	KE4CR	388
100	W2CDO	386

ACMA

91	W2VM	702
92	W3WHK	698
93	NE5A	697
94	WT3K	689
95	KM4JEG	670
96	SP7OGP	668
97	WM4Q	667
98	SM0HEV	665
99	HB9ARF	645
99	SP4JFR	645
100	WA4JUK	643

CMA

93	KW1X	3604
94	K2YR	3458
95	4X6GP	3388
96	G3NKC	3381
97	G3LDI	3362
98	W5AL	3296
99	W9CF	3279
100	IT9VDQ	3265

***73, Bill* WØTG** (CWops #1873)

CWops Operating Awards

XXT Schedule

SPEED	XST	DAY	TIME (UTC)	EXCHANGE	SPONSOR LINK
20 - 25	**MST**	Monday	1300 - 1400z	Name + QSO serial number	International CW Coun-
20 - 25	**MST**	Monday	1900 - 2000z	Name + QSO serial number	International CW Coun-
20 - 25	**MST**	Tuesday	0300 - 0400z	Name + QSO serial number	International CW Coun-
QRS	**AWT**	Wednesday	1145 - 1200z	RST + Name	A1Club
20+ wpm	**AWT**	Wednesday	1200 - 1300z	RST + Name	A1Club
25+ wpm	**CWT**	Wednesday	1300 - 1400z	Name + CWops # (or S/P/C)	CWops
25+ wpm	**CWT**	Wednesday	1900 - 2000z	Name + CWops # (or S/P/C)	CWops
25+ wpm	**CWT**	Thursday	0300 - 0400z	Name + CWops # (or S/P/C)	CWops
25+ wpm	**CWT**	Thursday	0700 - 0800z	Name + CWops # (or S/P/C)	CWops
< 20 wpm	**SST**	Friday	2000 - 2100z	Name + S/P/C	K1USN
< 20 wpm	**SST**	Monday	0000 - 0100z	Name + S/P/C	K1USN

QTX: Enjoying the Art of Conversational CW

Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

A couple weeks ago, I received an email from one of our QTXers, who wrote:

> "I was talking with another ham at Hamvention and somehow the topic of "real CW QSOs" came up. I mentioned I was in a 10-minute ragchew on 30-meters and before I could continue with my story, he interrupted me and said with conviction, "that wasn't a ragchew. It was too brief. You need to talk at least 30 minutes before it can be considered a ragchew."
>
> "Now, I know the old-school ARRL Rag Chewers Club requires a 30 minute QSO to receive their award but I didn't know that a time element was a universal consideration defining a ragchew. So, I enlisted my friend Claude (powered by Anthropic) to scour all sources and provide me with some clarification. Here is what Claude shared:
>
> "'A ragchew doesn't have a strictly defined minimum length, but in amateur radio culture, it generally refers to a leisurely, extended conversation — typically 15 to 30 minutes or longer. The key distinguishing feature is that it's a relaxed, wide-ranging chat rather than a brief exchange of signal reports and call signs (which might last only a minute or two).
>
> 'The term itself comes from the old expression "chewing the rag," meaning to chat idly. In contrast to quick contest contacts or routine check-ins on a net, a ragchew might cover topics like equipment, weather, personal life, hobbies, or anything else the operators feel like discussing.
>
> Some hams informally consider anything over about 10–15 minutes to qualify, but there's no official rule — it's more of a vibe than a timer. If you're just swapping signal reports and moving on, it's a QSO. If you're settled in for a real conversation, that's a ragchew.'"

So, there you go. CWops has decided that, for the purposes of the QTX awards, a ragchew is 20 minutes in length, though we acknowledge the shorter 10-20 minute QSOs (mQTX) in the monthly reports. I'm sure that you've had contacts that were shorter than 20 minutes that you consider a ragchew, though. I know I have. The important thing is to have fun and make a personal connection, no matter how long the contact.

73, Dan **KB6NU** (CWops #1418)

AAØYY: I worked several CWA Students this month. Some from John, AJ1DM's class, and some from Char, K8CXO's class. Lots of fun feeling their excitement.

DG5CW: /P season raised my QSO count again a bit. I guess my most interesting QSO this month was a chat about large antenna designs with Sten, SF7YT.

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K8UJDH: There were several very enjoyable ragchew QSOs this month with good friends. Then, when I ended a QSO, I had a call from a new friend who enjoys vintage rigs from RL Drake almost as much as I do. Great CW conversation and great fun. You never know who you will meet when you get on -the-air.

K8WWS: What a wonderful program that connects with other ops both with CW and life.

K9OZ: Despite the summer doldrums on the bands I was able to have some good ragchews. Always fun to work past students in CW Academy such as WA2PAY.

KF9VV: Fun month. Quite a few of the contacts were while using a remote controlled FTDX10 from my screen porch.

KG5IEE: Did some 6 meter work this month which cut into my QTX scores. Had a fun QSO with Craig N2DA as he was testing his new homebrew mag loop. I think he has a winner with that new antenna.

KR2Q: I was not very active this month.

KW4NJA: Not as much time on the air this month due to a new job, but a few short ragchews in the log nonetheless. I hope all are having a great summer.

N2DA: Enjoyed sked QSOs with AJ1DM, WA3JJT, and W4TG. Summer travel plans and FD reduced ragchew QSOs this month.

N8AI: Made my very first QSO with Mary VE3INE, our QTX leader every month. How did I miss her for so long???

N9EEE: I enjoyed one of those QSOs that flowed naturally and seemed like it could go on endlessly.

VE3INE: I am looking for more ragchew buddies to sked ragchew QSOs.

W8OV: Had a 22-min. QSO with a CWA Fundamental student N4JX at 17 wpm, which is pretty fast for that level.

WG9P: A special treat for me this month was meeting Ian, VA3ICC a retired ships radio officer. Ian shared with me what life was like in the glory days of cruise liners and what it was like to be one of three R/O's on board an ocean going cruise liner.

WS1L: Chatted with Bruce, K1BG, about POTA club activities, and Bruce, N6NT about QRP rigs. In non-Bruce QSO's, chatted with Don, WB6BEE and Al, K4UX about home maintenance projects.

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QTX - June 2026

Call	QTX	Call	QTX	Call	QTX	Call	QTX	Call	QTX
VE3INE	80	K9OZ	32	WS1L	14	K8WWS	6	W8OV	3
WA4IAR	46	KF9VV	20	AJ1DM	13	VE3WH	6	ABØWW	2
N8AI	45	KB6NU	16	DG5CW	11	N9EEE	4	GWØETF	1
N7HCN	39	KY4GS	16	K8UJDH	8	KN5EE	3	K8XCO	1
WG9P	39	W1SIM	15	N2DA	8	KW4NJA	3	KR2Q	1
AAØY	37	KG5IEE	14	G4KKU	7	ND4K	3	W3WHK	1

mQTX - June 2026

Call	mQTX	Call	mQTX	Call	mQTX	Call	mQTX	Call	mQTX
KY4GS	54	WA4IAR	18	KW4NJA	7	W8OV	4	VE3WH	1
AAØYY	33	DG5CW	16	GWØETF	6	AJ1DM	3	W1SIM	1
N8AI	32	KB6NU	14	ABØWW	4	KR2Q	3	WG9P	1
WS1L	24	G4KKU	13	KG5IEE	4	K8XCO	1		
KF9VV	18	VE3INE	12	N9EEE	4	ND4K	1		

QTX - Total 2026

Call	QTX	Call	QTX	Call	QTX	Call	QTX	Call	QTX
VE3INE	663	VE3WH	117	KN5EE	36	KW4NJA	11	WB3EGD	3
AAØYY	291	KF9VV	98	AE4GS	25	K8XCO	8	NØBM	2
N7HCN	268	KG5IEE	86	K8WWS	24	N3JT	8	WE5J	2
WA4IAR	239	N2DA	71	ABØWW	21	K6DGW	7	KE7IR	1
N8AI	219	W1SIM	69	N9EEE	20	DK9HE	6	KM4JEG	1
WG9P	209	KR2Q	63	DG5CW	19	N5LB	6	SV2BBK	1
KB6NU	151	AJ1DM	62	W8OV	18	W3WHK	4		
KY4GS	136	KCØVKN	58	K2MZ	16	G3EEC	3		
WS1L	133	G4KKU	55	N9FZ	12	GWØETF	3		
K9OZ	125	K8UDH	37	AA3TZ	11	ND4K	3		

mQTX - Total 2026

Call	mQTX	Call	mQTX	Call	mQTX	Call	mQTX	Call	mQTX
KY4GS	312	KG5IEE	76	KB4DE	22	K8XCO	10	KE7IR	4
AAØYY	226	G4KKU	57	AJ1DM	19	N3JT	10	DK9HE	2
N8AI	175	GWØETF	54	N9EEE	19	N7HCN	10	K8WWS	2
WS1L	170	VE3WH	46	ABØWW	17	SV2BBK	10	W1SIM	2
WA4IAR	100	VE3INE	38	G3EEC	17	K2MZ	9	ND4K	1
KB6NU	96	DG5CW	35	W8OV	17	K8UDH	9	PE2V	1
KF9VV	90	N9FZ	24	K6DGW	13	AA3TZ	5	W3WHK	1
KCØVKN	82	WG9P	24	WE5J	11	KM4JEG	5		
KR2Q	81	KW4NJA	23	AE4GS	10	NØBM	5		

My Story: New Member Introductions

Compiled by Tim Gennett, K9WX (CWops #1462)

Glenn Maclean, WA7SPY CWops #3957

In 1984 I was chairman for the Davis Double Century 200 mile bicycle ride in 24 hours. There were amateur radio operators who sat next to me during the entire event. I was able to answer questions regarding issues during the ride from the various sag vehicles and aid stations. They were all staffed with amateur radio operators using FM 2 meter repeaters.

I was so intrigued that I decided to study and take the Technician class license with the 5 wpm code test and passed. I went on and passed the 13 wpm code test and skipped the General license and got my Advanced license. I continued on and took the Extra class written test and 20 wpm code test and passed. I was originally licensed as N6OQN. I remained active with CW for a number of years and continued doing public service events as a radio operator on 2 meter repeater bicycle rides, runs and other events. I ended up being the communications chairperson for the Davis Double Century for 20 plus years soliciting amateur radio operators to man aid stations and vehicles to cover the 200 mile route.

When the vanity call sign program came out, I applied for my older brother's call WA7SPY. He received his Extra class license while attending Oregon State University. He went to the FCC in San Francisco and took the 20 wpm send- and receive-CW test and passed. At the young age of 25 he became a silent key. So, my brother continues to live on and WA7SPY is alive!

I stayed active on CW then started a family raising 3 children. I took a break from CW. I would get on CW occasionally.

I took the Aeronautics 2 year program at Sacramento City College and took the FAA test to become a licensed A&P (Airframe and Power plant) mechanic. I started out installing avionic equipment in Cessna airplanes. I worked for a big Cessna dealership from C150 to C-421. When the avionics shop was slow, I would work on the planes as a mechanic.

In January 1979 I went to work for the Cessna factory-owned Sacramento Cessna Citation Service Center exclusively working on all models of the Cessna Citation Jets. I became a lead mechanic running a crew of mechanics. I worked for Cessna for 39 years; I was lucky and got in on the ground floor when the Citation X came out and got to know all the airframe and engine systems very well. The last 20 years of my career I would travel, trouble shoot and repair all models of Cessna Citation Jets when they were AOG (Aircraft on Ground) and could not fly.

I am now retired. My interests are building and maintaining FM repeaters. I own with my best

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friend several high level repeaters that support the entire 100 mile Western States 100 trail. There is a 100 mile foot run every summer from Squaw Valley, CA to Auburn, CA through steep canyons and trail in the Sierra Mountains in 24 hours. There is no cell phone coverage for most of the trail. Our repeaters keep participants accounted for and safe. Then a few weeks later the same route is used for the Tevis Cup 100 mile horse ride. Our repeaters help people in the back country with emergency response. The USFS would not allow the events to take place without amateur radio support from our repeaters.

My other hobbies are fly fishing, camping, sailing, and troubleshooting and repairing electrical and mechanical equipment. I have completely rebuilt a 1988 Suzuki Samurai and use it to access our mountain top repeater sites.

I am looking forward to CWops events!

Tim Price, G4YBU #3953

In 1967 when I was 13 I was introduced to the amazing world of HF radio on the cadet force "Schools Net." We had a school station using an Eddystone 730/4 receiver with 19, 22 and 62 sets for transmit. A QRO valve linear was soon built and we were radiating a powerful signal using a simple wire dipole antenna up in the trees at the back of the armoury. The lights would dim and the 813 anodes change colour as you talked up the transmitter. This was fun!

As a new SWL I was fortunate to have a local amateur, G2FTU, who introduced me to the world of Morse code. I was in awe watching him work the world from his hilltop QTH with a monster cubical quad, all valve equipment and a mechanical bug key. He could see my enthusiasm and leant me an RCA AR77 valve receiver. That was it - I was totally hooked!

I studied at Corby Tech. for the Radio Amateurs Examination (RAE) and obtained my first licence in 1971 – a Class B licence – call G8FIH - for 2m and up. Then work assignments on projects in Africa, the Middle East and London meant radio was afforded only little time, but I grabbed the opportunity to study for the 12 wpm Morse test at Beckenham Tech. and after 10 weeks of intensive tuition and practice was on my way to the Coast Guard Station at North Foreland. Pass – hurray! But little time! Marriage, being a dad, and family life generally took over and I had to "park" many of my radio interests. But the seed was still there. I gradually built up my DXCC score mainly on SSB and AMTOR with occasional scary forays onto CW for a needed new country.

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When I retired from business in 2015 I had the opportunity to rekindle my parked radio interests. SOTA activations have always appealed, combining radio with the outdoors and hiking. It became clear that CW was a perfect match for SOTA. I wanted lightweight effective kit, and CW became my "go to" mode. My QRP kit comprises kit-built QRP Labs QMX, QCXs and my trusty Yaesu FT-817. My wife Jay and I like to travel and new SOTA summits open the door to fascinating vistas and experiences. We have made SOTA activations from 143 unique sites in 18 EU countries, VK, ZL. We visit Portugal frequently and I then use my CT7ASV call – I try to activate every Algarve summit each year!

Sailing is another of my interests and combining radio with sailing can be great fun and usually attracts much interest. Again, running CW QRP is my preference as the boat's navaids don't like lots of modulated RF floating around. Recent sailing in Croatia operating as 9A/G4YBU/MM for a few days visiting the rare Kornati National Park for POTA was a highlight.

I have learnt a lot about the excellent values of CWops through the Advanced course. Buzz, AC6AC and the team of co-advisers and my fellow students have made this a rich experience, beyond learning code and sharing skills to travel further down the journey to become an elite CW op – just like G2FTU was back in 1967.

A big thank you to Buzz, AC6AC and my sponsors Jay, NK2Y, John, G4PFZ, Charles, K3WW, Victor, VA2WA, Al, LY2MM, Phil, MM2T, Jim, SM2EKM, Dan, SM2INO and Ruda, OK2QA, my many supporters, fellow students and CW enthusiast friends.

David McNeill, N7WMN CWops #3960

I became interested in electronics and ham radio in my junior high school years when the Midland (Tx) Amateur Radio Club came to my school to recruit some of us to take classes to obtain our Novice license. I was licensed as WN5ZCU, and our group all ordered and built our Heathkit HW-16 radios. Due to a family move, I did not become active again until I was in college around 1975 and got my General license as WB7BLB. Then, career and family consumed my time until many years later when I got back into the hobby with my new call N7WMN.

I have always loved the technical aspects of ham radio and electronics, and spent my career as an electronics engineer, working as an I.C. design engineer and doing board level analog design for Tektronix, TriQuint Semiconductor and a small fabless semiconductor company, Avnera Corporation. After retiring I was able to pursue studying and learning more about RF circuits, which I have really enjoyed.

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One of my goals when I retired was to participate more in the social aspects of ham radio by focusing more on the operating side of the hobby. This led me to pursue the CWops Academy opportunities for improving my CW skills. I am grateful to Buzz, the co-advisors and my fellow students for a great experience over the last 6 months of improving my CW and getting on the air more.

My other hobbies that I enjoy are mostly fishing for kokanee here in Central Oregon, reading, and art and oil painting.

Ken Smyrk, W2KS CWops #3964

Most of my HF activity is CW, either portable QRP or at the base station, but I do participate in a few rag chews and nets, mostly on 40 m. I recently moved to Vero Beach, Florida, from Long Island, New York after retiring as an English teacher for 30 years. I am a member of the Vero Beach Amateur Radio Club, W4OT.

If you hear me calling CQ using CW during the late morning or early afternoon, I am more than likely portable at one of the many parks in or around Vero Beach, Florida, and am working QRP. If you hear me calling CQ any Saturday morning, I am most certainly with the Vero Beach Amateur Radio Club, W4OT. A great group of hams who dedicate Saturday to QRP transmission and experimentation, not to mention bagels, donuts, coffee, and good conversation.

When you hear my calling CQ for SKCC, I am using my 1967 Vibroplex Blue Racer, 1945 Vibroplex Standard, or my Begali Intrepid.

I can often be found on the lower end of 20 m, 30 m, or 40 m between the hours of 00:45 to 02:00 UTC. If you hear me, give me a shout.

Other hobbies include traveling, cycling, reading literature and history, vintage stereo gear from the 1970's, collecting vintage Jazz LP's, Piano, some gardening, and anything that piques my curiosity. I'm also an animal lover. Life is good!

I have a Pug named Henry, and he rarely leaves my side.

Dean Hettel, WC9C CWops #3944

Thanks for welcoming me to CWops and helping me build more confidence working CW.

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I became fascinated with ham radio about 1975 traveling with Bob, W9VOK, who had a Clegg 2 meter radio in his car. When he explained how repeaters worked and were able to work stations 70-100 miles away with a mobile 2 meter FM radio, I was hooked. The science was fascinating and I thought this is something I wanted to learn more about. This repeater concept that started with ham radio made its way to commercial radios for police, fire and other emergency and sparked my young mind.

I began learning code using the ARRL 5 wpm cassette tape in November 1976 as part of our Novice Class. My Elmer, Bob, W9VOK, always thought the ARRL code tapes should have started at 15+ WPM with more spacing between the letters to aid us to listen to the sound of letters instead of memorizing the dots and dashes like I did - worst thing that many of us did back then. That's why CWops is a great organization to learn CW and help us all to improve our CW skills and learn CW the correct way. Bob taught us basic radio theory with many hands-on examples along the way with the aim for us to earn our Novice license if we desired.

I started in ham radio living on our farm outside of Grand Ridge, IL in the spring of 1977 with call sign WD9FOO. Between high school and working on a family farm that included both livestock and field crops, ham radio was relegated to later evenings and weekends. Most Novice operators I met on the air were working to improve their CW skills to get their General license so most contacts were ragchew back then.

Early summer 1978 I earned my General license which mostly was due to my lack of electronics knowledge, otherwise I may have tried sooner. I tried to soak up any information possible from hams I met but with living on a farm and no driver's license, most of what I learned was reading in *QST, Popular Science & Popular Electronics* magazines. I'm more of a hands-on learner so it was a slow process just reading. Shortly before I earned my General license I was diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes and nurses focused on getting more exercise and being active to maintain my health and avoid complications. I was an active teenager so besides working on the farm, I tried to play sports whenever possible. My radio time was limited and at that time I avoided contests because I didn't know anyone interested in contesting.

I went to Illinois Valley Community College and graduated with AAS in Business Data Processing in 1983 to find work to pay my bills. I moved to a Chicago suburb in the fall of 1983 and didn't figure out a good ham radio that didn't cause TVI issues for my neighbors. So ham radio stopped other than an occasional 2m contact. Work, playing sports, etc. occupied most of my time. I married in 1988 and we had a son in 1990 and never made time to get back on the air but always kept my license current. It took work to earn and I was proud to hold my license.

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In 2016 my neighbor Roger, KF9D, invited me to come out to Field Day hosted by the MCWA ham radio Club. I hadn't been on the air in many years and made a few contacts via the GOTA station with the help of Jack, W9MU. That excitement made putting a station together a must. Wow, ham radio really changed from the early 80s to 2016. Getting back on CW was slow because I could only copy about 10 wpm. I was encouraged to try CWA classes and that helped so much. I was ready to begin at the beginning but was told I needed to join CW Academy Level II Class hosted by Ed Parson, K6HP. Thank you, Ed, for dealing with a guy who needed a lot of help and I appreciate your patience to get me back on the air working CW regularly again. After that class began studying for my Extra before the question pool changed so I could work DX outside the General portion of the bands. I passed my Extra on May 25th, 2020, and received my vanity call WC9C on December 01, 2020

A couple of MCWA members encouraged me to work on DXCC, which I never dreamed of when I got my license in 1977. It was a way to challenge me to get on the air more and it did. I have DXCC on 10 meters - 40 meters. I have 251 confirmed DXCC and have a few more pending in LoTW plus a few QSL cards that need checking. Finding new DXCC stations to work is more challenging now. I have earned a few WAS certificates.

I learned much more about contesting from many hams in the Algonquin area and now I don't avoid contests. With more practice I hope to work more stations with the limited time I have. I admit that I don't call CQ much whether it's a contest or casual QSO's but I'm trying to build more confidence and hopefully will change that part of my operating habits. During SST and MST I'm running vs S&P.

I normally work CW, SSB, and FT-4/FT-8 but prefer CW if possible. Some DXpeditions I've only been able to work on digital modes but I desire is to work them on CW if possible. I worked a couple 160m CW contests this past winter for my first 160m activity which was an exciting learning experience. I enjoy trying new bands and modes and continue to learn more about ham radio - what a great hobby! I currently only confirm contacts via LoTW at this time but need to order some QSL Cards for confirmations with ops that don't use LoTW.

We downsized to a ranch home in New Berlin, WI in the fall of 2024 to be closer to our grandkids who are 5 & 1 year old after living in Algonquin, IL for 32+ years. I joined WARAC Amateur Radio Club after moving to New Berlin, WI. My dipole antennas are lower to the ground here, adding to my challenges to work DX. I have a Kenwood TS-2000 as my primary 2m & 70cm radio. My Kenwood TS-890s is my primary HF radio and I just installed an Ameriton ALS-600 amp. I have a Kenwood TS-590sg as my backup HF radio that can be used as a secondary receiver for the TS-890s which is on my to-do list but not sure if I'll use it much.

I want to automate my station more and to be able to operate my radio from other parts of the house. My wife is dealing with health issues and I can't be in the radio room as much as I'd like. CW tests are great opportunities to practice my CW skills even with interruptions to help my wife needing assistance. Connecting my radio to the home network will take more investigation to get that working properly along with port sharing issues that I haven't worked out yet. So I always have projects....

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I enjoy chasing friends that activate SOTA locations and as time permits, I work other SOTA activators too. Setting up a station and carrying it to a summit to operate is a fascinating concept but I'm not ready to jump into that yet. My home station has more than enough projects that haven't been completed yet.

Lance Stronk, KK4DX CWops #3961

My interest in radio started when I was around 8 or 9 years old. A friend of my sister was putting together a Heathkit AM transistor radio at our home one holiday and I watched with fascination – I mean what kid wouldn't be fascinated when we had to borrow my mom's electric mixer to use as a noise source to adjust the receiver sensitivity? It was all magic to me.

Although the person that introduced me to electronics and radio had gone, I still had the bug. I listened to SW and then I naturally drifted into CB where I could get on the air and talk....and talk I did. In the early 1970s, with my dad's license and callsign, I was on the radio every day after school. All during my foray into radio, I had a burning desire for electronics. I built kits, learned to etch PCBs, soldered, etc. In the 8th grade, I had made up my mind that I wanted to be an EE.

There was a licensed teacher in our high school who was facilitating testing for students interested in ham radio. I knew my electronics well enough and my code copy was there, but I didn't really study the regulations. As a naïve kid I figured – how hard can that be? Guess what? I failed my Novice test! I was crushed. With a little more study, I passed the test the 2nd time and received the call KA1BMQ.

2 months later, my high school friend Dan, WA1YYQ, and I went to the NYC FCC field office to test for upgrades to our licenses. A new license class was had with each trip: Technician, General, and even 3rd Class Radiotelephone. I got my General Class ticket in 1979 and I operated mainly on SSB.

After some "bumps" in college - which include destroying the school club tribander antenna and rotator mounted to the schools counterbalanced flagpole – I eventually received my BSEE and was married to my college sweetheart, Karen, KA1LDG.

We moved to Orlando, Florida for my first job as an EE at Martin Marietta. While in Florida, I decided to study for the Advanced Class test. I passed and checked that I wanted a new call and was given KK4DX. It was not a vanity call, but I really liked it. We moved back to CT in 1988, and I sold most of my ham gear. Then life happened. With aging parents, family, MSEE, work, 3 kids in college.

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Ah! Yes! Life! Raising children with Karen, Alpine skiing, beer brewing, lute playing, gardening etc. – there were many diversions. I wound up back into ham radio in 2021 after I retired from Sikorsky Aircraft.

Last year, when I decided that I wanted to get back into CW, some new doors opened; not just ½ of the HF spectrum either!

In 2026, the SKCC group coaxed me into being an SKM special op and that did wonders for my "fist" and my confidence in copy – especially during a pileup. I was bitten by the CW bug. An Op with whom I did an SKCC "marathon", Mary, VE3INE, and CWA advisor suggested CW Academy and I decided that was the next step to further improve my CW. What a great suggestion! Thanks Mary!

I enjoyed meeting and learning from the folks in my CWA class and I know I will enjoy being part of the CW ops community!

Dileep "Dile" Balan, DL2AJ/VU2DLE CWops #3952

I am absolutely delighted to be a part of CWops. A huge thank you to CWA and the wonderful advisors who have helped me along the way: David, MØWDD, Daynah, KQ4JKO, Ralf, DL1RS, Matthias, DF2OF, Buzz, AC6AC, and David, KO4OWS. Thank you all for helping so many of us truly enjoy the rhythm and joy of CW!

My ham radio journey started during my school days, when I first learned about the hobby from newspapers and science magazines. I got licensed in 1996 with the callsign VU2DLE. Back then, the Indian amateur radio exam included a mandatory CW listening and sending test. Resources were scarce, so I learned code using pre-recorded audio cassettes and built a homebrew key for sending practice. Immediately after getting my license, I jumped right onto the air. I modified a Philips two-band shortwave radio to tune into the 40m band and homebrewed a 7-watt QRP transmitter. It was based on a famous circuit designed by OM Vasant, VU2VWN — a design that was incredibly popular with many hams across southern India at the time. Antenna was a simple half-wave inverted V dipole 40m. I have logged plenty of AM and CW QSOs throughout southern India, as well as a few occasional DX contacts.

Later on, I found myself switching to voice modes more frequently. Over time, my usage dwindled, and I eventually lost my CW skills completely.

End of 2022, I moved to Germany. I received my German callsign DL2AJ in the midst of summer 2023. Early autumn of 2023, I received the DARC membership and I belong to DOK P02.

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I made several attempts to teach myself CW using various methods, but I never seemed to make any real progress on my own. Realizing I needed a structured approach, I finally decided to join the CW Academy.

My motivation to relearn CW was reignited by Rama, VU2JXN and Gopan, MØXUU, who encouraged me to take on the CWA Academy. Thanks to their steady encouragement, I stayed focused all the way from the Fundamental course to the Advanced class. I am incredibly grateful to Cherry, VE3CAI for his continuous support throughout this journey. I also want to extend a special thanks to Phil, DL9PK and Erik, ON5AI for the invaluable Zoom practice sessions that helped me get back head copy confidence.

On the technical side of the hobby, I have a real passion for homebrewing. Over the years, I've built several projects, including QRP AM/CW transmitters and a Radioberry SDR. I also homebrew all of my own HF wire antennas, as well as a VHF/UHF IOio antenna for satellite QSO. Homebrewed K3NG CW Keyer, an open-source Arduino project for CW practice, and it was my absolute go to during my CWA Zoom classes. The LCD screen on the K3NG keyer echoes back exactly what you've keyed. It's been a massive help for me in ensuring I'm sending clean, well-spaced CW.

One of my favourite aspects of the hobby is hunting for diamonds in the rough at local hamfest flea markets. I love breathing new life into old gear. There's a special satisfaction in taking a neglected antenna tuner or a non-working QRP rig, bringing it to the workbench, and restoring it to its former glory. I also love participating in amateur radio events. It is always a great pleasure meeting fellow operators, particularly those with whom I have previously logged a contact.

I am deeply grateful to be part of such a welcoming community. Thank you all for the warm reception, and I look forward to catching you down the log!

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